ASPECTS OF SOCIO-CULTURAL TRENDS IN MUGHAL INDIA FROM 1526-1707

THESIS

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ABSTRACT

In the present thesis an attempt has been made to study the social set up and culture in Mughal India. The emphasis of the thesis is on religious trends and thought, Sufi and Bhakti, social condition, language and literature, architecture and painting, and fine arts etc. I had to cover a vast research through empirical, philosophical and national inquiry. It has been found difficult to be both comprehensive and intensive. Some work has been done on the cultural history of Mughal India, but no systematic study has been made. This thesis is a humble attempt to fill this gap is our studies.

The source material for the study is varied and scattered. What we possess is a series of glimpses furnished by Persian chronicles, travelers accounts and indigenous writers, who noted what appeared to them of interest. The help form the secondary sources is also taken.

The present thesis has been divided into *six* chapters besides the Preface and Conclusion. A brief resume of each chapter is given below.

The first chapter deals with the *Religious Trends and Thoughts* of the Mughal period. Particularly the Akbar cosmopolitan outlook and others equally Mughal emperor played an important role for the peace and prosperity of nationalized and secularized India. It is noticed that the Mughal emperors of India were far more liberal than their predecessors (Delhi Sultan). They gave such rights and concessions to non-Muslims that the conquered people had never enjoyed under any rule. Akbar employed non-Muslims to posts of distinction. Raja Todarmal was made Finance

minister and for some time he also held the post of Prime Minister as well. In order to please his non-Muslim subjects, Akbar removed all tax; prohibited the slaughter of the cow and himself abstained from beef, garlic and onions; and Jaziya in 1563 and 1564 respectively. The sole aim of Akbar liberal attitude towards Hindus was bring the people of the two religious closer. He attempted to bring harmony between Muslims and non-Muslims and did succeed to some extent in his effort. Aurangzeb (1658-1707) tried to cement the Hindu-Muslim relation as far as possible. His tolerance is proved from Benaras *Farman* dated Jamadiul Awwal 1069/march 10, 1659, issued the local muslim officers to safeguard the Hindus and preserve their temples, testifies to his liberal attitude towards his Hindu subjects. Bernier, contemporary French travellor, observes that non-Muslims enjoyed full religious freedom under Aurangzeb. The allegation that Aurangzeb tried to minimize number of Hindu officials in the government service is baseless – proved from Prof. Ather's Ali book *Mughal India : Studies in Polity, Ideas and Culture*, OUP, 2006.

The matrimonial alliances with the rajput princesses, Sikh Guru tussle, issue of conversion and re-imposition of the Jaziya, destruction of the temple and the Shivaji problems is shown in the light of scientific temperament.

The second chapter devotes to *Sufi and Bhakti Movement.* The new ideas of some saints and thinkers of Mughal India have been discussed. The way to God and salvation, proposed by them, was connected neither with canonical knowledge, nor with caste purity, nor with access to sacred

books. Changes were introduced by the Enlightened saints (sufi and Bhagat) in many a traditional criteria of purity, saintless virtue. The values of human nature, according to the Sufi and Bhakti saints were not dependent on one's caste, community and lineage. The religious reformist schools and movements with their criticism of traditional and empty forms of worship and their attempts to decanonize and humanize religion, formed a bridge however, narrow, over which the thought and culture of India moved from the middle ages into the nineteenth century and further. Progressive trends (Nirgun Bhakti) of medieval Indian thought were never fully victorious, but they succeeded in producing a tradition of their own, in producing people who could discard some obsolete ideas and move forward. at the same time preserving all that was useful in their legacy. These are main facts of the second chapter.

Chapter third covers the *Social Conditions*. Hindu-Muslim society, feudal system, trade and education has been brightly picked up during the Mughal period. Chapter further mentions different types and designs of costumes of men and women of different social gradations, both amongst the Hindus and the Moslems. Besides it also throws fresh light, on the toilets and ornaments of both the sexes. Contemporary literary works have been copiously quoted, and at the same time, the data collected from this source have been critically compared with those obtained from the Persian chronicles and the accounts of the foreign travelers. The chapter discusses in considerable details, the social status of women in those days. Elaborate references have been made to the prevalence of certain almost universal social features like early marriage, dowry divorce (among the Moslems and

the lower caste Hindus in particular), Purdah, polygamy, Sati, Jauhar, and Prostitution. The 'harem and slaves' maintained by the Emperors, Rajput rajas and the nobles has been elaborately described. The pleasures and pains of the inmates of these 'Harems' and the chief sources of their recreation have also been discussed. References have also been made to the pitiable lot of the Hindu widows. Under the heading social life the festivities, food habits, and religious practices have been considered.

The chapter fourth analyse the *Language and Literature*. It was due to the encouragement, patronage and liberal outlook of the Mughal rulers which led to the development and enrichment of the Persian particularly and the local languages and literature which played an important role in integrating and beautifying the diversity of India through out the Mughal period.

The important role of Persian and Sanskrit-Hindi as vehicles of thought and government at the all India level, and the development of regional languages, largely as a result of the growth of the Bhakti movement, have already been mentioned. Regional languages also developed due to the patronage extended to them by local and regional rulers.

These trends continued during the 16^{th} and seventeenth centuries. By the time of Akbar, knowledge of Persian had become so widespread in north India that he dispensed with the tradition of keeping revenues records in the local language (Hindavi) in addition to Persian. Persian prose and poetry reached a climax under Akbar's reign. Abul Fazl who was the

leading historian of the age, set a style of prose-writing which was emulated by many succeeding generations. The leading poet of the age was his brother, Faizi who helped in Akbar's translation department. The translation of the Mahabharata was carried out under his supervision. Utbi and Naziri were the two other leading Persian poets. Hindus also contributed to the growth of Persian literature. Apart from literary and historical works a number of famous dictionaries of the Persian language were also compiled during the period.

In Hindi, the *Padmavat*, the story written by the Sufi saint, Malik Muhammad Jaisi, used the attack of Alauddin Khalji on Chittor as an allegory to expound Sufi ideas on the relations of soul with God, along with Hindu ideas about *maya*.

Medieval Hindi in the Brij form, that is the dialect spoken in the neighbourhood of Agra was also patronized by the Mughal emperor. From the time of Akbar, Hindi poets began to be attached to the Mughal court. A leading Mughal noble, Abdur Rahim Khan-i-Khana, produced a fine blend of Bhakti poetry with Persian ideas of life and human relations. Thus, the Persian and the Hindi literary traditions began to influence each other. The most influential Hindi poet was Tulsidas who venerated Rama as a god and hero, and he used a dialect of Hindi spoken in the eastern parts of Uttar Pradesh.

Regional languages acquired stability and maturity and some of the finest lyrical poetry was produced during this period. The alliance of Krishna with Radha and the milkmaids, pranks of the child Krishna and

stories form the *Bhagwat Puran* figure largely in lyrical poetry in Bengali, Oriya, Hindi, Rajasthani, Marthi, Sindhi, Kashmiri, Urdu and Gujarati during this period. Many devotional hymns to Rama were also made. Both Hindus and Muslims contributed in this. Thus, Alaol composed in Bengali and also translated from Persian.

This undoubtedly expresses the sentiments of all those writing in local languages. It also shows the confidence and the status acquired by these languages. Due to the writings of the Sikh gurus, Panjabi received a new life.

The fifth chapter *Architecture and Painting* deals the magnificent forts, palaces, gates, public buildings, mosques, *baolis* (water bank or well), etc. constructed during the Mughal period.

Akbar was the first Mughal ruler who had the time and means to undertake construction on a large scale. Akbar took a close personal interest in the work of construction both at Agra and Fatehpur Sikri. Persian and central Asian influence can be seen in the glazed blue tiles used for decoration in the walls or for tiling the roofs. For their forts, the Mughals drew on the developed Indian traditions of fort building, such as the ones at Gwalior, Jodhpur, etc. The climax of fort building was reached at Delhi where Shah Jahan built his famous Red Fort.

In 1572, Akbar commenced a palace-cum-fort compelx at Fatehpur Sikri. 36 km. from Agra-along with a large artificial lake, it included many buildings in the style of Gujarat and Bengal. But the most magnificent building was the mosque and the gateway to it called the Buland Darwaza

(the lofty gate) built to commemorate Akbar's victory in Gujarat. The gate is in the style of what is called a half dome petal. This devise, borrowed from Iran, became a feature in Mughal buildings later.

With the consolidation of the empire, the Mughal architecture reached its climax. Towards the end of Jahangir's reign one seek the beginning of the practice of putting up buildings entirely of marble and decorating the walls with floral designs made of semi-precious stones. This method of decoration, called pietra dura, became even more popular under Shahjahan who used it on a large scale in the Taj Mahal. The Taj Mahal brought together in a pleasing manner all the architectural forms brought together in a pleasing manner all the architectural forms developed by the Mughals. The chief glory of the Taj is the massive dome and the four slender minarets linking the platform to the main building. The decoration are kept to a minimum. delicate marble screens. pietradora inlay work and Kisoks (*Chhatris*) adding to the effect. Mosque-building also reached its climax under Shahjahan. A lofty gate, tall, slender minarets, and a series of domes are a feature of the Jama Masjid at Delhi.

Although not many buildings were constructed during Aurangzeb reign. The Mughal architectural traditions based on a combination of Hindu and Turko-Iranian forms and decorative designs continued without a break into the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Thus, Mughal traditions influenced the palaces and forts of many provincial and local Kingdoms.

Further the Mughals made distinctive contribution in the field of painting. They introduced new themes depicting the court, battle scenes and the chase, and added new colours and new forms. They created a living tradition of painting which continued to work in different parts of the country long after the glory of the Mughals had disappeared. A part form the Jains, some of the provincial kingdoms, such as Malwa and Gujart extended their patronage to painting during the fifteenth century. But a vigorous revival began only under Akbar. While, at the cost of the Shah of Iran, Humayun had taken into his service two master painters who accompanied him to India. Under their leadership, during the reign of Akbar, a painting workshop was set up in one of the imperial establishment (*Karkhanas*). A large number of painters, many of them from the lower caste, were drawn from different parts of the country. From the beginning, both Hindus and Munshis joined in this work. Thus, Dasavant and Basawan were of the famous painters of Akbar's court. Apart from illustrating Persian books of fables, the painters were soon assigned the tasks of illustrating the Persian text of the Mahabharata, the historical work *Akbar Nama*, and others. Indian themes and Indian scenes and landscapes, thus, came in vogue and helped to free the school form Persian influence. Indian colours, such as peacock blue, the Indian red, etc., began to be used. Above all, the somewhat flat effect of the Persian style began to be replaced by the roundedness of the Indian brush, giving the pictures a three-dimensional effect.

Mughal painting reached a climax under Jahangir who had a very discriminating eye. Jahangir claims that he could distinguish the work of

each artist in a picture. Under Jahangir special progress was made in portrait paintings of animals, Mansur was the great name in this field. Portrait painting also became fashionable.

Under Akbar, European painting was introduced at the court by the Portuguese priests. Under their influence, the principles of foreshortening near and distant people and things could be placed in perspective was quietly adopted.

While the tradition continued under Shahjahan, Aurangzeb's lack of interest in painting led to a dispersal of the artists to different places of the country. This helped in the development of painting in the states of Rajasthan and the Punjab hills. The Mughal tradition of painting was, however, revived during the 18^{th} century under the patronage of the successors of Aurangzeb painting on mythological themes, such as the alliance of Krishna with Radha, the *barha masa* (seasons) or the rajas (melodies). The Pahari school continued these traditions.

The sixth chapter gives the information about the *Fine Art* (i.e. calligraphy, sculptures, garden, jewellery, music and singing).

The art of calligraphy reply (beautiful writing) flourished in India from the beginning of the Delhi Sultanate. The patronage of the Mughal Emperors who encouraged it both as sisterly art to painting and for copying books of eminent authors, induced many Persian calligraphers to migrate to India. Calligraphy also formed an important factor in the training of princes and princesses. Hence many of the emperors were themselves good calligraphers. Babur invented a new style of writing in 1504 A.D. known

as the *Baburi Khat.* Along with others arts, calligraphy received grant encouragement and patronage from Emperor Akbar reign, of which the *nastaliq* was a special favourite of the empire Mohammad Husain of Kashmir who was conferred the entitle of Zarin-Qalam (or the gold pen). His son Mohammad Ali had a special skill in the Khat-i-Jalali. Aurangzeb himself acquired sufficient proficiency in penmanship. Aurangzeb's hobby of the Quran is well-known. In his reign we find development of the Shikasta style side by side with the nastaliq.

The other forms of artistic activity was under the mughals was sculpture. During Jahangir's reign, it was fully developed into People's art. Further the Hathi-pol statues carved and erected at Ajmer, Agra, Fatehpur Sikri and Delhi fort respectively. It shows the keen interest of the Mughal's cultural activities in different fields along with the patronage to worker class with awards.

The art of garden-building, which Babur brought with him to India and adopted by his Mughal successors. Its main characteristic was artificial irrigation in the form of channels, basins or tanks, and dwarf water falls, so built that the water brimmed to the level of the paths on either side; and the plan involved a series of terraces on sloping ground, usually numbering eight to correspond with the eight division of the Quranic Paradise, but some times seven, to symbolize the seven planets. The chahr-bagh (ground plan) of the Persian and Mughal garden was a square or rectangle, divided into a series of smaller squares or parterres, the whole 'being encircled by a high wall with serrated battlements, pierced by a lofty gateway'. The

larger garden were usually provided with four gateways, and small octagonal buildings marked the angles of the outer walls. The garden of the Taj Mahl is based on the same four filled plot, but differs from other tomb – gardens in having a beautiful marble tank in the centre of the plot instead of the tomb, which in this case stands at the end of the garden, overlooking the river. The mughal emperor, nobles and princess had indulged themselves to built many garden at different places i.e. Agra, Delhi, Lahore, Kashmir, Multan and Sindh.

The manufacturing for jewellery as arts had grasped the mind of the mughals. The famous Kohinor diamond demand was always from Humayun to Aurangzeb. Many fine rubies and fine gems were under the Jahangir possessions. Jahangir's jewels included one and a half maunds of unset diamonds, twelve maunds of pearl's, two maunds of rubies, five maunds of emeralds, one maund of jaude, besides jevelled sword hilts, poniards, drums, brooches, cigrettes, saddles, lances, chair's of state, flagon's, winecus, charms and rings all these jewellery art's were manufactured under the mughal's karkhana. These all art shows as great beautiful vessles and cup of jade were collected by Jahangir and Shahjahan. Aurangzeb gave the importance to a large cup of rock crystal.

The cultural life in which Hindus and Muslims co-operated was music and singing. Akbar patronized Tansen of Gwaliyar who is credited with composing many new melodies (ragas). Jahangir and Shahjahan as well as many Mughals nobles followed this example. There are many stories about burial of music by the orthodox Aurangzeb but what is often

ignored is that he was veena player and during his reign, many books on music were written. There were numerous musicians at Mughal court - Hindus, Iranis, Turanis, Kashmiris, both men and women. The court musician's are arranged in seven divisions, one for each part of the day. Abul Fazl gives 36 singers at Akbar court.

Thus Mughal India (1526-1707) presents a picture of harmony in every aspects of socio-cultural trends. It was an age of enlightenment, advancement, peace and amity. Muslim-Hindu religious leaders, scholars, poets, artists, artisans, architects and musicians worked together in creating wonders in every art and made India a paradise on earth.

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Certificate

Certified that **Mr. Md. Rehan Ghani** worked under my supervision on the topic **"Aspects of Socio-Cultural Trends in Mughal India from 1526-1707"**. This thesis is the original work of the candidate and I find it suitable for submission for the award of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

(Prof. Tariq Ahmed)
Supervisor

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(MD. REHAN GHANI)

PREFACE

Historians have, for many decades now, been working on the social and cultural history of India. They have produced a large number of works providing meticulous details about the life of the people viz. their religion, morals, manners, foods, dress, art, culture, etc. In these works the political, dynamic and constitutional aspects were relegated to the background. Although the lead in this direction was taken by the western scholars, the Indian scholars did not lag behind. The pioneer in this regard was K.P. Jayaswal, who dealt with the social institutions prevailing in ancient India in his book *Hindu polity*. The other prominent scholars who dealt with the various aspects of social, economic an cultural life in ancient India were A.S. Attelkar, Dr. Beni Parsad, and Dr. Mookherji.

The social and cultural history of medieval India has not been ignored by historians as well. K.M. Ashraf's *Life and Conditions of the People of Hindustan*, P.N. Chopra's *Some Aspects of Muslim Rule in India*, Dr. Tara Chand's *Influence of Islam on Indian Culture* and Dr. M. Athar Ali *Mughal India : Studies in Polity, Ideas and Culture* are some of the influential works on the subject. These works are indeed valuable, but they do not cover all the aspects of the social, culture and economic history of medieval India. The source material is inadequate and scattered, and regional differences stands as a barrier to meaningful general study.

The study of Mughal culture would help us better understand the historical roots of our composite culture that has recently been attacked by the right wing, communal forces. The Mughal state contributed immensely in the

emergence of a shared Hindu-Muslim, that was tolerant, catholic and broad-minded in nature. Indeed, our study of the Mughal society and culture is not without contemporary relevance.

The present work is confined to the period between 1526 and 1707, and covers the Northern, Central and Western India. The Deccan did not come fully into the administrative orbit of the Mughals even at the end of the 17th century.

The main objective of the present work is to unequal the ideas and institutions which shaped the life of the people, and contributed to synthesis of the Hindu-Muslim culture in such areas as religion, thought, social set up, language, literature, architecture, painting and Fine Arts etc. through marshalling facts.

Md. Rehan Ghani

ABBREVIATIONS

CU	Calcutta University
CUP	Cambridge University Press
HT	Hindustan Times
IA	Indian Antiquary
IC	Islamic Culture
ICHR	Indian Council of Historical Research
ICPR	Indian Council of Philosophical Research
IHQ	Indian Historical Quarterly
IHR	Indian Historical Review
JASB	Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal
JMIL	Journal of Medical Indian Literature
JRASB	Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal
KBLJ	Khuda Bakhsh Library Journal
PIHC	Proceedings of the Indian History Congress
PUBH	Peace Be Upon Him
OUP	Oxford University Press
VBQ	Vishwa Bharati Quarterly

FAMILY TREE OF THE GREAT MUGHAL

TIMUR (1336-1405) CHINGIZ KHAN (1160-1227)

Miran Shah Chaghatay

Sultan Muhammad

Abu Said Yunus Khan Mogul = Isan Daulat

Mirza Omar Shaykh = Qutlug Nigar

BABUR (1483-1530) = Maham

Hamida = HUMAYUN (1508-1556)

AKBAR (1542-1605) = Manmati

Jodh Bai = SALIM JAHANGIR (1569-1627)

SHAH JAHAN (1627-1657) = Mumtaz Mahal

Dilras Begum = AURANGZEB (1618-1707)

MU AZZAM BAHADUR SHAH

JAHANDAR Rafi ush-shan Azim-ush-shan

RA`FI UD-DIN RAFI UD-DARAJAT FARRUKHSIYAR

RAUSHAN AKHTAR MUHAMMAD SHAH ALAMGIR II

AHMAD SHAH SHAH ALAM II

AKBAR II

BAHADUR SHAH ZAFAR

Chapter I

RELIGIOUS TRENDS AND THOUGHTS

Medieval Indians lived an active spiritual life which was by a thousands ties connected to the real problems of society. The Indian thoughts of the middle ages were as contradictory, variegated and diversified as India itself. Any enquiry therefore into directions of the development of the Indian thoughts during the Mughals period would be of immense value and interest.

Crucial changes were going on in the 16th and 17th centuries in the attitude of the Indian mind towards the social problem of the time. Thus as objective and powerful tendency to create a strong centralized state gave rise to new political ideas and made it necessary to reconsider some traditional views on the role and significance of state power. A factor that could be of great significance was the socio-religious and cultural contact between Hindus and Muslims which had a bearing on every sphere of life.

The numerous religious reformist schools during medieval period of India having association with Hinduism, Islam and other religious communities, produced a variety of socio-ethic principles, mystical practices and cultural traditions.

Medieval India, it is argued, experienced a general wave of socio-religious protest something like Europe which experienced under influence of Calvin and Luther. Beginning from the south under the inspiration of the reformers, mystics and poets, a wave of reforms swept throughout India.[1]

To take 'religion' as a subject of empirical inquiry and to begin investigating it as a human reality must have demanded not only great effort but also considerable courage. The confidence thereby put in man's intellectual capacities was such that one of the major field traditionally held to be 'irrational' was opened not only to philosophical inquiry but also to national research. And although the discussion on the rationality both of scholarly *research and of the religious phenomenon, may still be going on, it is important* to note that the frontiers of research were moved ahead and that, like nature and history, art and morality, religion too became susceptible of being studied.

Hinduism

In Mughal India especially in Akbar's time, the general position of Hindus underwent a change Akbar used to hold discussions with saints in order to ascertain the religious truth. His letter written to Philip XI of Spain thus speaks of his religious quest and liberal outlook towards all religions :

> "As most men are fettered by the bonds of tradition and by initiating the ways followed by their father ancestors, relatives and acquaintances, every one continues, without investigating the arguments and reasons to follow the religion in which he was born and educated, thus excluding himself from the possibility of ascertaining the truth, which is the noblest aim of the Human intellect. Therefore, we associate at convenient reasons with learned men of all reasons and thus profit from their exquisite discourses and exalted aspirations".[2]

Akbar acquired the knowledge of *Hinduism* through Puzukhotam and Debi. He listened to *Vedas* and respected the Hindu saints. Dadu was one of them. It is said that he wished to attend Dadu's Brahm Society and accept its teachings .In 1586 Akbar met Dadu and talked to him for forty days. Akbar was deeply

impressed by his devotion and even took his women folk to receive the saints blessings.[3] Akbar along with Tansen visited Mirabai. He paid her homage and presented a necklace be made an offering at the lotus feet of Lord Krishna.[4] The Emperor also went to see saints Surdas along with Tansen. It is said that Akbars relations with saints Jadrup initiated him into the doctrines of Vaishnavism. Akbar held the saint in a high esteem and whenever he passed by Ujjain, he paid a visit to Jadrup in his cave. He used to have religious discourses with the saint to satisfy his spiritual quest.[5]

The Emperor conferred the title of 'Goswami' upon Vithaleshvara, who had impressed him with his learning and piety. In1576-77 he visited the saint for religious discourses and gave him a gift of lands of Gokul. A farman was issued which stipulated these lands free from any taxes. Hamida Banu Akbar's mother too issued Farmans in favour of the Saint.[6] At Gokul, Vithaleshvara allowed Akbar the darshan of his beloved Shri Nathji[7]. Akbar's liberal approach in matters of religion was appreciated and acclaimed by saint Tulsidas also.[8] Akbar advised Todarmal to be liberal in religious beliefs when the latter refused to eat anything before worshipping the idol which he lost[9].

Abul Fazl too had a high opinion of Hinduism and held the Kashmiri Brahmins in high esteem. He even rationalized and justified idol worship.[10] Regarding Akbar's religious liberalism Jahangir comments:

> "But in his character one prominent feature was that every religion he seems to have entered, through life, into terms of unreserved concord and with the virtuous and enlightened of every sect and profession of faith, he did not scruple to associate, as opportunities occurred".[11]

Thus the gods of other religions were no stranger and were equally respected and revered by the believers of other religions. Akbar like a Hindu devotee, presented a golden umbrella to the shrine of the fire goddess of *Jwalamukhi* in the modern district of Kangra in Punjab[12]. Akbar visited and spent sometime in *Gorkhatri*, a shrine of *Jogis* in Peshawar[13]. He worshiped the Sun and had collected 1001 Sanskrit names of the sun and read them daily. He prostrated every morning in the worship of the Sun. He regarded fire as manifestation of God, and, 'a ray of His rays'.[14] He had ordered that a fire-flame should be burning at a specified place in the royal fort for all twenty-four hours. The practice of everybody present standing up in row when the lamps were lit in the evening became a ceremonial in his court.[15] He sent a copy of the *Mahabharata* and a list of the names of God to his son Murad to help him in his prayers.[16] Abul Fazl writes in *Ain-i-Akbari* that an Emperors command the epics of other religions were read to him.[17]

Akbar also issued two gold and one silver coins, known as Sia Ram coins (one gold coin is kept in British Museum and another in France). The silver coin is kept in Kala Bhavan at Kashi. One side of the coin mentions the year and the other has the pictures of Sita and Ramchandra.[18] His reverence for Hindu gods won him the highest regard from the Brahmins who regarded him as Ram Krishna's incarnation.[19]

Akbar in a letter to Shah of Persia opined :

> "The various religious communities are divine treasures entrusted to us by God. We must love them as such. It should be our firm faith that every religion is blessed by Him and our earliest endeavour to enjoy the bless of the ever-green garden of the universal toleration. The eternal king shower his

> favours on all men without distinction. King who are shadows of God should never give up this principle.[20]

In a letter, written to his son Murad Akbar emphasize his secular outlook, do not be offended by diversity of religion. Struggle hard to sit in the shade of peace with all.[21]

Like the emperor of Kashmir Zainul Abidin, Akbar also promulgated a decree, which declared that no person was to be interfered with on account of his religion. A strict action was taken against those who tried to impose their religious convictions upon others. Under one of his regulations Hindus who had become Muslims under pressure were allowed to return to the faith of their forefathers.[22] His ministers were vigilant to ensure that the state should secular and stood for justice. When a Mughal official converted a Hindu temple into a Muslim schools, he was severely punished by Todarmal.[23]

The Hindus were made to feel that the emperor considered himself as much their protector as of any one else. In deference to the Hindu sentiments, he prohibited the slaughter of the cow. It was a crime punished by amputation.[24] He prohibited the eating of beef and Himself abstained from beef, garlic and onions. In 1563 he abolished the tax on Hindu pilgrims at Mathura and other Holy places and in 1564 by Jaziya was abolished through out his dominions.[25]

In such a cordial environment diversity in spiritual matters led to the development of all faiths much to the annoyance of orthodox who were denied any special privileges and interference in the running of the state administration. A Sharif of Amul, who was expelled on account of his religious

views from every Muslim country found safe asylum in India where he was allowed to preach his own philosophical view point. He wrote :

> Hindustan is a wide country where there is an open field for all and no one interferes with another's business so that every can live just as he pleases.[26]

Disgruntled *Mullahs* made desperate attempts to dislodge the 'secular sovereign. He was condemned and characterized as 'Devil'. A mullah of Jaunpur urged a general revolt against, Akbar. The orthodox also made contacts with Akbars brother Mirza Hakim, the ruler of Kabul and invited him to Hindustan in order to raise him to the throne. Though failed in their attempt, they never forgave him and went to the extent of denying him a burial according to Muslim rites.[27]

For all his respect for Hinduism, however, Akbar was averse to a few of its customs, especially *sati*, the burning of widows. Poets wrote verses expressing their horror as well as admiration for the self-immolation of Indian women as the highest expression of absolute love. Akbar also admired widows who wished to be cremated with their deceased husbands. However, in 1583 he ruled that no woman was to be compelled to commit sati.[28]

Jahangir, the son and successor of Akbar followed the path shown by his father. He respected Hinduism, held religious discourses with the Hindu saints, sought their guidance and visited the Hindu shrines.

Jahangir was deeply influenced by saint Jadrup whom he met with his father who took him to seek saints blessings. Such was the influence of Jadrup on Jahangir's that the latter not only released prince Khusrau from prison upon his intercession but often changed state laws to make them conform to Hindu

standards. Following the emperor many Muslims nobles visited the saint and sought his blessings. Abdur Rahim Khan-i-Khanan used to offer *Sajda* to Jadrup. The author of *Dabistan-i-Mazhib* himself met the saint and learnt from him the mantar Suraj (duan Aftab, worship of sun).[29]

Jahangir continued Akbar's practice of inviting Hindu scholars and philosophers to the court and held discussions with them. He was very keen to meet the *Jogis* and visited for the purpose the Gorkhatri near Peshawar which was an important centre of the jogis.[30] The emperor visited the temple of Goddess Durga at Kangra. When he visited Jwaramukhi temple, he gave order that the adjoining buildings should also be repaired and added to the temple.[31] He visited several other important Hindu religious centers and gives descriptions of the temple of Brindaban, Hardwar and the lofty temples of Kashmir. His description of Hardwar that was visited according to Thomas Roe by over half a million of pilgrims every year is worth mentioning. He writes:

> Hardwar is one of the most famous places of worship of Hindus and many Brahmans and rachises have chosen a corner of retirement in this place and worship God according to the rule of their religion. I gave alms in cash and goods to each of them according to their requirement.[32]

Akbar's policies continued during Jahangir's reign. On once he was advised to impose *Jaziya*, he got furious. He was not content simply to repudiate the suggestion and rebuke the rash and selfish proposer of it, but punished by cutting his head for having "had the temerity to seek his own profit at the expense of his sovereigns reputation, the welfare of the community and good ordering of the state.[33] Besides, he maintained previous orders of not

slaughtering animals twice a week, on Sunday and Thursday. This was strictly enforced. He used to visit the city in order to discover that meat was not being sold on the days of his visits. The *Kotwal,* the officer responsible for seeing that the royal orders were observed, was called for and flogged. So strict, however, was Jahangir in enforcing his injunctions that in the fourth year *Eid* fell on a Thursday, the sacrificial slaughter of animal was postponed to the following Friday.[34]

Following Jahangir, Shah Jahan and his son Prince Dara, too had liberal outlook in religious affairs. Shah Jahan honoured Pandit Jagannath with the title Pandit raja. The emperor reserved the right of giving final decision in religious matters and was daily blessed by Pandit Jagannath with the address as 'Dillishwara be Jagdishwara' (The Lord of Delhi is the Lord of Universe). Maurique states that in Orissa Peacocks, were not allowed to be killed during Shahjahan's reign. Dara was a disciple of Baba Lal and patronized a number of Banaras Brahmins.

Goswami Narsimah Saraswati and pundit Jagannath were held in special favour.[35]

Dara Shikoh made another attempt to bridge the chasm between the two great religious culture of the empire.[36] The great dream of Dara's life, which was shattered by his untimely death, was the brotherhood of all faiths and unity of mankind. For long he studied Sanskrit and along with her sister Jahanara read Hindu epics and Vedas with great ability. At his command many part of the *Vedas* were translated into Persian.[37] He presented a stone railing to the temple of Kesho Rai at Mathura. He gave full liberty to Jai Singh, Raja of

Jaipur, to appointment the presiding priest at the temple of Brindaban built by Man Singh.[38]

Dara's study of Hinduism and Islam had convinced him that there was no difference between the two. In *Tariq at –al-Haqiqat Dara* he wrote :

> "Thou art in the Kaaba as well as in the Somnath Temple. In the convenient as well as in the tavern, Thou art at the cup, the sage and the fool; The friend and the stranger. Thou art thyself the moth around the light of thine own, beauty.[39]

Dara's approach towards Hinduism like his great grand father Akbar was that of a seeker of truth, in whose heart was burning passion for knowledge. In this quest for unity of God, he came to know that Hindu monotheists had given a clear exposition of the same, and so turning towards Hinduism he observed:

> "Therefore I considered on what account is Hindustan conspicuous for monotheism, is so much discourse on Divine Unity and where fore in the exterior and interior practices of this most ancient sect of Hind, is their no disavowal of the Divine Unity and no apostasy against the Unitarians".[40]

Dara wrote in his work Risala-Haqnuma : *ba-zer-i- but imanist pinhan* i.e. Faith lies hidden beneath the idol.[41] He translated the Upanishads because he regarded them as Divine Secrets. In Dara Shikohs view, the upnishads were among the works alluded to by the Quran, which makes a number of reference to the fact that no race of people is 'without The Book (Sura 17:16; 53:22; 57:25). His efforts to effect a rapprochement between Vedanta and Sufism were astutely titled *Majma al-Bahrain* (Confluence of the Two Seas).

Because of his liberal views, the forces of conservatism and reaction termed him as an apostate and a heretic.

Dara's Majma-al Bahrain in which he made a comparative study of fundamentals of Islam and Hinduism annoyed the fundamentalists. But Dara convinced of his view point as he was never cared for opponents . He and his wife like Akbar and Jahangir made their obeisance to the sun every morning and when the lamps were hightened in the evening, every members of their household stood up in reverence to the Goddess of Fire.[42]

Even orthodox emperor Aurangzeb, who is known for demolition of temples held Hindu saints in respect and conferred Jagirs on the temples and the *pundits, maths* and *jogis.* While camping at the fort of Mandsaur, on his way to Deccan. About three hundred years have passed since Aurangzeb died yet up to this day the priests of many Hindu temples in India possess copies of royal farmans which bestowed jagirs on temples under orders of Aurangzeb. The temple of Someshwarnath in Anail, near Allahabad and Jangamwari Shiva Temple at Banaras still have copies of Aurangzeb's Farman.[43] In 1659 to 1685 he issued farman in favour of Jangum Badali Shiva temple and great temples of Mahakateshwara Ujjain, Balaji temple Chitrakut, Umanand temple Gauhati and the Jain temple of Shtrunjal and Abu. He gave land endowments to Hindu temples at Maheshwar Nath, Benaras, Mahshpur Multan and to the *maths* in the state of Marawar, in Rajasthan.[44] It is also said that Aurangzeb issued an order by which a Jagir of ten villages in the Devasar *Pargana* (Kashmir) was given as present to Rishi Pir. He also conferred upon him the title of *Padshah-i-har-do-jahan.*[45] Besides throughout his reign he continued to uphoeld strict enforcement of the prohibition against cow-slaughter.[46]

Capt. Alexander Hamilton, in describing the conditions in Bengal, during the reign of Aurangzeb wrote :

> "There are above one hundred different sects.... But they never have any hot disputes about their doctrine or way of worship. Everyone is free to serve and worship God in his own way and persecutions for religion's sake are not known among them".[47]

Sikhism

Monotheism and a liberal approach towards other religion was a main feature of the teachings of Sikh Gurus. The religious system founded by Guru Nanak (1469-1539) came to be known as Sikhism because his followers were "the *Sikhs*" (disciples) of the *Guru* (Preceptor).[48] It sprang from within Hinduism. Guru Nanak denounces the inegalitarian social system with its inbuilt discrimination, especially against the common people and women. He condemns administrative oppressions and corruptions, and the discriminatory policy of the contemporary Muslim rulers against their non-Muslim subjects.[49] Because of his non-sectarian views Baba Nanak became extremely popular and his influence spread rapidly in the entire region. His bhakti drew nearer both the Hindus and Muslims.[50]

Guru Nank was followed by 9 gurus: Angad (1539-52), Amar Das (1552-74), Ram Das (1574-81), Arjan (1581-1606), Hargovind (1606-44), Har Rai (1644-61), Har Krishn (1661-4), Teg Bahadur (1664-75) and Govind Singh (1675-1708). All the gurus were believed to be one in spirit. No one could be regarded as a guru without being installed or designated by a reigning guru. The office of guru was thus one, continuous and indivisible. The decision taken by a success or were as sacrosanct as the decisions taken by the founder.[51] What was said and done by all the 10 guru's constitutes the Sikh tradition.

The most obvious result of the movement was the Sikh community called the *Sikh Panth*. By the beginning of the seventeenth century, the Sikhs

had become conscious of their distinct identity and the Sikh Panth could even be seen as a kind of state within the Mughal empire.[52]

This was one reason why the Mughal rulers started interfering with the affairs of the Sikhs. Guru Arjan was sentenced to death by an imperial order in 1606. Emperor Jahangir (1605-27) himself said that the Guru's blessing the rebel prince Khusrau was the immediate cause.[53] Jahangir imprisoned Guru Hargovind for some time in the fort of Gwalior, and under Shah Jahan (1628-58), commandants (faujdars) used armed force against him. Guru Hargobind abandoned Ramdaspur to reside at Kiratpur in the territory of a hill chief. Aurangzeb (1659-1707) interfered in the succession to the guruship and Guru Tegh Bahadur was executed in Delhi on his orders in 1675. At the same, time, rival claimants to the Guruship (for example, Pirthi chand, the elder brother of Guru Arjan, and his line) were patronized by the Mughal emperors.

By the mid-seventeenth century, the Sikhs, who were a peaceful sect to begin with, took to arms and very soon became a great menace to Mughal rule in the North-West. But even at that period many Sikh gurus emphasized that their struggle was not against Islam, but against the Mughal rule. The tenth Guru of Sikhs, Govind Singh, under whom the Khalsa movement acquired its most militant form insisted that 'the temple and the mosque are the same, and it does not matter in what way a man worship God.[54] In his celebrated letter to Aurangzeb 'Zafar Nama' he accused the emperor of cruelty and fanaticism and of not believing in the Prophet and not respecting even Islam.[55] There were many Muslims in Guru Gobinds armies. He was very friendly with a sufi preacher Pir Buddhu Shah when the Afghan mercenaries betrayed Guru

Gobind, the elderly Pir brought to the Sikh army his sons and disciples, who fought bravely to the end. When Guru Gobinds army was destroyed and he himself narrowly escaped death, some Muslim peasants risked their lives to give him shelter.[56]

With a hundred year of Guru Govind Singh 'death' according to Khuswant Singh, the trend of reversion of Sikhism towards Hinduism continued in the succeeding generations.[57]

Jainism and Zorastrianism

Mughals had good relations with both Jainism and Zorastrianism. Jain Gurus were held in high esteem, their institution got liberal grants and favours from the Mughal rulers. Vihayasena Suri, Bhanuchandra Upadhyaya made a profound impression upon Akbar and influenced his mode of life. In obedience to the teachings, Akbar almost wholly abstained from eating flesh, renounced his beloved sport of hunting, prohibited slaughter of animals earmarked days on which consumption of meat in any form was totally prohibited and ordered the release of the caged birds.[58]

Akbar conferred the title of Jagadguru on Hari Vijaya Suri. The Advisvara temple on the sacred hill of Satrunjaya near Palitana in Kathiawar combines the praise of this teacher with that of his patron Akbar.[59] Akbar issued Farmans to the Governors, Jagirdars and other official of the subhas of Agra, Lahore, Multan, Malwa, Gujarat, and Bengal, granting the request of Harivijaya Suri, the Acharya of the Jain Swetambara sect to hand over the control of the Kothis, temples, places of pilgrimage of the Jain Swetambara community throughout the empire. In the order it was also prohibited to kill the animals near these territories.[60]

Jahanagir had many *monks* at his court and one of them called Siddhi Chandra was honoured with the titles of Nadir-i-Seamen and Khushfahami. The Emperor during his reign many Jain images was consecrated and in the inscriptions of some of them the name of Padshah Jahangir were also engraved. In the early sixteenth century, the emperor in accordance with the tenants of Jainism took a vow of not injuring any living creature.[61] Shah jahan and Dara Shikoh also respected Jain Monks and their religious institutions.

Zoroastrianism too had an impact on the life and thinking of the Mughal rulers. Its influences reflected in the reverence of fire by Akbar. He adopted the Persian names for the months and days and celebrated the fourteen Persian festivals. He wore under his clothes the sacred shit and the girdle of the Parsees.[62] He bestowed on the Parsee priest Dastur Maharajji Rana of Gujarat two hundred bighas of land as a free grant in perpetuity and in 1595 added further grant of a hundred bighas of land to his son Kaikubad.[63] Mughal rulers, continued the royal celebrations of Nauroz festival of the Parsees.

Christianity

The Mughals from Akbar to Dara Shikoh were cordial towards Christian fathers. Akbar received the Gospel with reverence and sometimes took off his turban to show respect to the Christians sacred book and relics. Akbar used to visit the chapel and prostrated before the pictures of Jesus and Mary.[64]

Akbar took many Europeans in his service. Among them there being many Catholics, they petitioned the King to permit their religious priests to

settle in Agra for the fact that without priests they could not exist. Akbar sent envoys to the city of Goa to obtain priests, where upon the Jesuit fathers came. For them he ordered the constructions of a Church in Agra. He entertained Jesuit Fathers at his court and also built a Church in the palace and there he often attended Christian worship.[65] He gave the fathers permission to baptize all those who wished to become Christians, to open a school to teach Portuguese and to build a Church at Lahore, Canbay and Agra.[66] In 1599 Lahore chapel was completed to which Akbar sent costly gold and silk clothes for its adornment. He also sent from his own collection a picture of Mary for the chapel. When the Church at Lahore was consecrated, the Mohammmedan Viceroy of Lahore honoured the ceremony by his presence. Great crowds of the city thronged the chapel. Akbar went so far as to adopt the son of a Christian, Yaqub of Aleppo, who was also known as Mirza Iskandar, but did not convert him.[67] The liberty of the rulers reflected when the fathers were allowed even to criticize Islam freely. A man who attempted to destroy the Church was imprisoned and was released only when the Fathers interceded for him. Besides, the Fathers were empowered to give refuge to those who had offended against the law as the Church had been declared a sanctuary by a royal decree.[68]

Akbar's broader outlook led him to entrust the education of his son Murad to the care of Fathers. He charged Abul Fazl to translate the Gospel and to distribute among the Ulema. He often subscribed his letters with the sign of cross and as a symbol of appreciation of Christianity, he wore round his neck a cross and a locket containing the portraits of Jesus and Mary.[69]

Jahangir too had great regards for the Jesuit and bestowed several gifts upon them and their Churches. He also provided them large sin to erect their religious places. In a Farman Jahangir granted to Christian six Bighas of land situated in Mauza Agra. He also gave them a house and a Church in Lahore officers were further ordered not to molest them for any tax and no abstraction should be caused during offering of their prayers.[70] Fathers were allowed to take out a procession through the town of a dead body of a Portuguese who had died at Fatehpur Sikri with crucifiers and lighted tapers and to busy him with all publicity. He also permitted them to build a hospital and to establish a medical mission.[71]

The emperor also wore round his neck a locket containing portrait of the Savior and the Virgin. marked his letters with the Christian symbols and even permitted the Fathers to convert the people if they liked. At Agra twenty baptism took place in 1606. Church processions with full catholic processions with ceremonial were allowed to parade the streets and cash allowances were paid from the treasury for church expenses and the support of the converts.[72] But the most sensational of the conversions was the public baptism of Daniyal's son and a grandson of the emperor in 1610.

The Princes clothes in Portugues costumes and wearning crosses of gold round their necks, proceeded on elephants from the palace to the Church through the streets packed with eager spectators. At the Church the princes were received with every sign of rejoicing and the bell was rung with such violence that it broke.[73]

They were baptized and given new names of a European complexion. However, after some time, they gave up their new faith and returned to Islam

Terry commented on Jahangirs religious state policy as, All religions are to be tolerated and their priest held in high esteem.[74]

Dara had a secular approach in religious matters. Bernier wrote about Dara's view point regarding other religions as;

"Born a Mohammadan, he continued in the exercise of that religion; but although this publicly professing his adherence to the faith, Dara was in the private a Gentile with a Gentile and a Christian with a Christian."[75]

Judaism

Among the various religious groups who met at Akbar's court in his "Ibadat-Khana", or hall of worship (1578), the court historian Abul Fazl mentions not only "Sufis, Sunnis, Shias, Brahmans, Sabeans, Zoroastrians, Christians", but also explicitly, Jews.[76] The "House of Wisdom" shone resplendent with the light of holy minds – Sufis, doctors, preachers – Jains, Christians and Jews". That jews participated in this "parliament of religion" which was set up by Akbar is furthermore attested by the Jesuit father and traveler. A monserate who gives a description of the discussion in which Jews also actively took part.[77] An even more detailed account of such disputation with jews participating can be derived from the famous Persian book on comparative religions called "Dabistan", which mirrors many of the events of Akbars time. The author of "Dabistan-i-Mazhaib" refers repeatedly to the presence of jews and their active roles in the disputations. He mentions that "a jew was present and participated in the discussion with a sunni and a Shii", and refers to another disputation in which he states "another day a jew presented himself and Akbar placed the Christian in opposition to him for a religious

discussion". In another place we read "a learned philosopher came into the hall where Hindus were present, and three other learned men, a Muslim, a Christian, and a Jew. These were summoned and ranged in opposition to the learned philosopher...." And a discussion ensued in which the jew played an active role.[78]

It was not only the presence of Jews at the court of Akbar which is attested by the sources, but also the existence of synagogues. Among the places of worship which are specifically listed in a royal decree of Akbar, as reported by his court historian, the Jewish place of worship, the synagogue, finds mention. The reference to a synagogue, "Kanisa"[79] as a terminological contrast to "bi'a" (church) leaves no doubt that Akbar and his circle had a clear conception not only of the presence of individual Jews, but also of the existence of their house of worship. The existence of synagogues is also borne out by the English traveler, Sir Thomas Roe who, in a letter to "syngoags" in the Moghul empire.[80] He was born in the first part of the seventeenth century and came from Kashan in Persian, a well known seat of an important Jewish community half-way between Teheran and Isfahan.

It is reported that when Sarmad moved from Hyderabad to Delhi, towards the end of the reign of Shah Jahan, Dara Shukoh had already learned of his fame. He therefore sought Sarmads company, paid him many marks of respect, visited him constantly, even introduced him to his father, the Mughal Emperor, and a close friendship developed between the two men. Dara Shukoh found in Sarmad his favourite and his friend, a person whose Sufic learnings and religious ideas appeared to him very strongly. It is said that "Dara kept

Sarmand company and enjoyed his discourses for a considerable period". It is significant that in one of the letters which were exchanged between Dara Shikoh and Sarmad – the only one thus far preserved – Dara Shikoh addressed Sarmad as "my master and preceptor".[81]

In 1647 he moved from Tata to Hyderabad and in 1654 he went to Delhi, which was then the capital of the Moghul Emperor, Shahjahan Sarmad has entered the annals of Persian literature as a composer of Persian sufic poetry, as the author of "Rubaiyat". He is mentioned and quoted in the Persian literature of his time and became widely known and popular as one of the outstanding sufi poets in Moghul India. "Rubaiyyat", always the typical vehicle of expression of sufi poets, also became for Sarmad, following the example of Umarkhayyam, the form in which he expounded his sufic philosophy and religious beliefs.

Akbar's delight in religious disputations was paralleled by his passion for books, particularly for translations of the Holy Books of the various religions and of books of Greek, Arabic and Sanskrit literature. Anxious to have Arabic and Persian translations of the Holy Books of Judaism and Christianity in his collection, wrote a letter to Philip II of Spain, in the year 1581, in which among other matters he states:

> It has been brought to our notice that the revealed books, such as the Pentateuch, the Gospel and Palms, have been translated into Arabic and Persian. Should there books, which are profitable to all, whether translated or not. Be procurable in your country, send them to me".[82]

Whether this letter was answered and whether he received from Spain the requested books is not ascertainable, but this latter is an amazing document.

Despite the scantiness of information concerning the economic and cultural structure of these Jewish newcomers from Persia to Mughal India – be it Lahore, Agra, Kashmir or elsewhere – it is amongst them that we must look for those learned Persian – speaking Jews who participated in the discussions and disputations at the court of Akbar.

Forty years after Akbar, however, in the time of his grandson, Shahjahan, a jew appears on the scene in India who was destined to play a unique role and to assert considerable influence on the religious and intellectual life of India.[83] This jew appears in Persian as well as in European sources under the name of Mohammad Said or Said Sarmad.

Far from being satisfied with the elimination of Dara Shikoh, Aurangzeb also began to remove all those who were formerly associated with him and who were suspected of following the same heretical and unorthodox ideas. Among those who fell victims to that purge was Dara Shikoh's close friend, Sarmad.[84]

The dramatic circumstances of Sarmad's execution in the year 1661 need not be discussed here. It is reported that an unrecedentedly huge crowd was present and that he was buried at the spot of his execution in the precincts of the great mosque in Delhi.[85] It seems that the people who loved and admired Dara Shikoh transferred their love to Sarmad, the favourite of Dara Shikoh, and his tomb is even today visited and venerated by large crowds.

Political hostilities of the Mughal Empire

From the very inception of Muslim rule in India till the end of the Mughal Empire, there were frequent conflicts and wars between the rulers

either for the expansion or for the protection and preservation of their respective state boundaries. Hindu rulers fought with Hindu rulers and the Muslim with Muslim Kings but unfortunately the wars between the rulers belonging to different religions were given communal colours by the communalists of both the communities. These were projected as wars either for imposition or for the protection of the Faith. The real mundane motives were highlighted so as to divide the people on communal lines and to use their support in the name Jihad or Dharma.

Political hostilities led to oppression, torture and execution. Religion was later used to justify ordinance such actions. The rulers irrespective of their religion behaved in a similar manner when their power was challenged.

It would, therefore, be wrong to say that the Muslim rule was Islamic rule in India. The Muslim rulers never tried to Islamise the country's administration. Either they followed the administrative pattern as they found it or introduced certain innovations in keeping with the indigenous requirements. P. Saran has convincingly argued in his '*The Provincial Governments of the Mughals*' that two main factors influenced the growth of the Mughal local governments: (1) The aim and object of the sovereign, that is to say, the Mughal rulers ideal of government. (2) The existing institutions of the country when its administration fell to the lot of the Mughal rulers.[86] About the grass roots level administration Saran observes:.....almost all other affairs pertaining to religion, charities, public works and education, were left to private initiative, because the socio-economic system of the country was so deep rooted and worked so well in those days that it would have been unwise to interfere with

it. Thus while the Mughal rulers did not initiate any positive schemes of serving their rural subjects, they at least extended their full patronage to the time – honoured institutions which had long served the land and were still good for service.... Thus in a way the whole of the village local government became assimilated into the general administrative system so as to create a harmonious machinery in which no part seemed isolated or to suffer from neglect.[87]

The bulk of the people lived in villages and, as pointed out above, at this level the administrative machinery not only followed the local pattern inherited from the past but also left the grassroots officials undisturbed. Thus the self sufficient villages, where the mass of the Indian population lived, remained, by and large. unaffected by the political vicissitudes and the turbulence at the nerve center of power. Local Hindu chiefs, Zamindars, Rais, Thakurs and Chaudharis were instrumental in the revenue exactions for the central imperial authority. As long as they did this job well and paid the revenue to the imperial treasury, they were left undisturbed.[88] Prof. Toynbee feels that even at the upper echelon the Brahmins played an important role in running the Muslim Empire. "Under all political regimes in India", says Toynbee, "one of the prerogatives of the Brahmins had been to serve as minister of the state. They had played this part in the India World before playing it in the affiliated Hindu society. The Mughal's Muslim fore-runners and the Mughals themselves in their turn had found it convinent to follow the example of the Hindu states which they were supplanting. Brahmin ministers and minor officials in the service of Muslim rulers made this alien rule less odious to Hindus than it otherwise would have been....."[89]

From the fore going account it is reasonably clear that the Muslim rulers did not, to any appreacable degree, disturb the village autonomy where th&-majority of the people lived. However, the ruling classes (including both the Hindus as well as Muslims) extracted and lived off the surplus from the toiling peasantry. The imperial glory was based on the sweat and blood of the peasants. The ruling classes, however, had their own mutual contradictions. Our historians, more often than not, pre-occupy themselves with the conflicts and contradiction of ruling classes and project them as the conflict between Hindus and muslims. Such an approach has, besides over simplifying the complex historical process, seen from the communalists eyes.

Though, Aurangzeb banned the construction of new temples but at the same time he also prohibited the Mughal officials in Banaras from interfering with or disturbing the Brahamans or any other Hindus who visited the temples.[90] Besides all his regulations cannot be considered to be anti-Hindu in tone because many of the ordinances affected Muslims as well. He banned the celebrations of Moharram. The prohibition against music, for example, also applied to religious hymns sung on the anniversary of the birth of the Prophet. On Thursday nights lamps used to be lighted on the tombs of the saints. Aurangzeb discontinued it. Nauroz festival too was banned.[91]

If Aurangzeb destroyed the temple he also destroyed Jama masjid of Golkonda. A purityan can never think of the destruction of his religious place but as said Aurangzeb used religion for his selfish interests in this case the purpose was to get the money hidden underneath the Mosque. The ruler of Golkonda, the famous Tanshah, after collecting revenue of the state, did not

pay his due to Delhi. In few years they were accumulated into crores. Tanashah buried the Khazana and erected a Masjid over it. When Aurangzeb came to know of it, he ordered the demolition of the mosque. The buried Khazana was seized and utilized for the benefit of the people.[92] This shows that Aurangzeb did not make any distinction between a temple and a mosque, in the matter of judicial findings. He had no hatsed for Hinduism or Hindu saints and did not justify the unjustified claim of the Muslim theologian against the Hindus. Munshi Siyan Rai of Batala, the famous historian of the time of Aurangzeb, mentions in the Khulastul-Twarikh, a village Dipavali where the tomb of Shah Shamsuddin Daryayi is situated: He writes :

> "Both Hindus and Muslims have a great faith on Shah Shamsuddin. But a Hindu name Deepali has proved superior to both Hindus and Muslim in his faith. After Shah Daryayis death Deepali was appointed the first trustee and keeper of the tomb with unanimous consent of both Hindus and Muslims although he was not Muslim by religion.... Some years ago the Mussalmans timed to get the Hindu keeper dismissed, so much so that the religious reasons were urged for this. But the Alamgiri Hakumat did not allow this agitation to succeed".[93]

This version of the historian Munshi Siyan Rai places Aurangzeb into different picture. Dow in his History of Hindustan, points out that Aurangzeb did not prosecute the adherents of others persuasions in the matter of religion. Elphinstone states that "not a single Hindu suffered death, imprisonment or loss of property for his religion or indeed, that any individual was ever questioned for the open exercise of the worship of his father"[94] Norris, a British ambassador to India during 1699-1702, writes that there were no communal feelings or tension between the different religious bodies during

Aurangzeb reign.[95] Besides not a single temple was demolished in Deccan where he spent the last twenty seven years of his reign. This, he used religion and religious leaders for his political ambitions that remained supermost in his life. His son Akbar too followed his fathers tactics. When the prince rebelled against his father, he got a fatwa from some Mullah that Aurangzeb was irreligious.[96]

The destructive religious zeal of Aurangzeb was not applauded by all sections of the Muslim society. Even the Shah of Persia accused him of unmanliness. In a letter to Aurangzeb, he wrote: "You style yourselves a world conqueror while you have only conquered your father (and murdered) your brothers. You have failed in every undertaking requiring manliness".[97]

The Khalifa at Mecca, was also critical of Aurangzeb's religious policy. According to J.T. Wheeler the religious policy followed in India by Aurangzeb was considered anti-Islamic by the Khalifa, who on this ground refused to receive an ambassador from the emperor. Shah Abas of Iran too, did not approve Aurangzeb's fanaticism in the name of religion. He wrote him to struck coin upon a round of cheese: Aurangzeb brother-slayer, father-seizer[98] Aurangzeb thus used religion and religious leaders for his irreligious actions. He posed himself to be a pious Muslim but discarded the religious dictums if these did not suit his designs. The Ulema's verdict was taken for public consumption but he did not allow them a share in shaping state policies. In a reply to a petition requesting the dismissal of non-Muslims from the posts, Aurangzeb pointed out: religion has no concern with secular business and in matters of this kind, bigotry should find no place" and after quoting the

Quranic text "To you your religion and to me my religion "stated that if the Petitioners requests were to be acceded to "We shall have to destroy all the Rajs and their subjects'.[99]

Though Aurangzeb is known for his anti-Hindu stance yet it is also a fact that he not only won the war of succession but also maintained his rule with the co-operation of the Hindus. He firmly maintained the policy of allying with the Rajputs and other non-Muslim elements of Indian society. He gave Jai Singh and Jaswant Singh a higher position in Imperial affairs and the Imperial hierarchy than had been accord to any Hindu since the days of Man Singh. The number of Hindus in the nobility did not decline but actually increased after 1679.[100] During Akbar's time out of total 247 *mansabdars* 32 were Hindus. But in Aurangzeb's time the number of Hindus increased to more than any Mughals rulers.[101] We can easily understand this composition of the Hindu-Musalaman statistically through the book of Prof. Athar Ali.

Table 1 : The Mughal Mansabdars during different period of the Mughal rule

	Turanis	Iranis	Afghanis	Indian Muslims	Other Muslims	Rajputs	Marathas	Other Hindu	Total
(a) 1595	33	23	2	14	4	21	0	1	98
(b) 1620	22	33	8	11	4	21	1	0	100
(c) 1565	22	33	5	10	3	21	5	1	100
(d) 1658-78	37	67	15	26	14	27	14	2	202
Average (a)(b)(c)(d)	18 5%	33 5%	7 5%	13%	7%	13 5%	7%	1%	
(e) 1679-1707	42	65	18	35	34	28	47	8	277
Average (e)	15 5%	24%	6 6%	12 5%	12%	10%	17%	3%	

Source · From M. Athar Ali, *Mughal India Studies in Polity Ideas, Society and Culture, OUP,* 2006, p. 68.

Even in his private life Aurangzeb had co-ordial relation with the Hindus[102] Prince Azam, Aurangzeb's son was married to the daughter of Kirat Singh, son of Mirza Raja Jai Singh. The princess was not converted to Islam and the Raja gave a rich dowry in the Hindu fashion at the time of her marriage.[103]

Reimposition of jazia too not always spurred by religious zeal. More often there were economic motives as well. Economic and political reasons perhaps led Aurangzeb to reimpose jaziya. His predecessor Shah Jahan had spent great deal on pomp and show and had depleted state treasury. The same could not be matched by increased surplus from peasantry. Besides, Jaziya was not imposed upon the servants of the state.

When Aurangzeb reviewed his finance in the thirteenth year of his reign, he found the expenses had exceeded income during the preceding twelve years. Consequently a number of economic reforms were effected, including the retrenchment of many items in the expenditure of the Royal budget. The continuous wars in the Deccan too had badly strained the Royal treasury.[104]

Another factor for the reimposition of the Jaziya was the growing unemployment among the clerical elements. So rampant was the unemployment that even the descendents of Shaikh Moinuddin Chisti, the patron saint of the Mughals, were living in poverty and want. By earmarking the proceeds of Jaziya or distribution in charity among the learned, the *faqirs*, the theologian etc. and further by providing that the new department of Jaziya, with its own treasury and seat of *Amins*, should be staffed predominantly by these sections, Aurangzeb offered a huge bribe to the orthodox clerical

elements. Through clerical influence Aurangzeb hoped to rally all sections of Muslims behind him.[105] Besides, it was an outcome of a deepening political crisis. By the time Aurangzeb had asecended the throne, the political and religious conditions in India had gone under a great change, the Sikh in Punjab, the Bundelas in Central India and the Marathas in Deccan were busy acquiring political power under the guise of service to their respective faith Aurangzeb, in order to have the support of his community presented himself as the protector not only of the faith but also of their economic interests.

However, all were not happy with the imposition of Jaziya. A powerful section of the Muslim nobility including his own sister Jahanara and his son Akbar opposed its revival she visited her brother and begged him to reconsider an act of such devastating regression. She argued that 'India represented an ocean sustaining the ship of the Mughal royal family; what emperor could tax the ship on which he sail? Predicting widespread rebellion, she ended by trying to throw herself at Aurangzeb's feet. But Aurangzeb remained unmald, he invoked justification of Muhammad and the Quran.[106]

His son Akbar who had escaped to Persia wrote a letter to Aurangzeb criticizing the decision of Jaziya as :

> "Your Majesty puts your trust in hypocritics wearing a huge turbans and accepted as theologians because they carry a Quran under the arm and hold a chaplet in their hand. Yet are these nothing but snares of hell, with their hypocritical exterior of piety. They gave false counsel and by their appearance misled the world. From this class of riffraff your Majesty has selected your councilors and countries. These are your guardian angles.... Men who are dealers in adultered wares".[107]

The religious plea taken by Aurangzeb also provided a similar slogan to such Hindu chiefs who were not serving under the Mughal Emperor. The conflict between Aurangzeb and Shivaji, like similar other conflicts between central monarch and provincial vassals, has been portrayed as a religious conflict. It was basically a struggle for power with no holds barred while lionizing of Shivaji by the Maratha historians is understandable fight as he did to fulfill Maratha aspirations and to achieve autonomy for them, it would be knave for a serious historians to be swayed by such prejudices. He has to objectively evaluate the character and nature of this conflict as also its genesis.

Shivaji undoubtedly fought for, in a way, liberation of the Maratha peasantry. He, this, became the symbol of their aspirations. "…..there is no doubt", says Sardesai, "that in his approach to the people he introduced the idea of the unity of the Marathi speaking people as a political entity, for the achievement of *Swaraj*. The word *Swaraj*, which occurs in his letters and contemporary documents, was to be a *Swaraj* for Marathas, meaning the Marathi people".[108] Shivaji was a master strategist of guerrilla war. He challenged the might of Mughal empire with his small but highly compact and mobile army. The Maratha peasantry rallied round Shjivaji who symbolized their aspirations.[109] However, he was not fighting in defence of Hindu religion. His use of epithet like *Go-Brahmana Pratipalak* or his slogan of *Hindupad Padshai* should not be misunderstood in this context. Such epithets or slogans were used by Shivaji not to rally round Hindus in defence of Hinduism against the onslaught of Islam but to establish his caste equation vis-à-vis other upper Hindu castes and thus to ligitimise his rule.

As a matter of fact the germs of conflict lay elsewhere. The Mughals had traditionally given much more importance to alliance with the Rajputs than with the Marathas. Shivaji was aspiring for a status in the Mughal court which was higher not only to that granted to other Maratha sardars but also equal to that of Rajput sardars. Aurangzeb, within the frame work of the system went furthest to accommodate the aspiration of the Shivaji. He was given autonomy in his area and was exempted from personnel service except in the Deccan) – a privilege extended only to the Rana of Mewar, the most illustrious and the oldest ruling house in Rajputana. The mansab granted to Shivaji's son was also not a low one, being equal to that held by the Rana of Mewar. But it was not likely to satisfy Shivaji since similar ranks had already been granted to a number of Maratha chiefs regarded by Shivaji as inferior to him in status and power.[110]

It was difficult to grant more than this to Shivaji as the *Jagirdari* system, as pointed out earlier, was under going deep crisis. Furthermore, for strategic reasons the Mughals did not like emergence of a powerful Maratha state sprawling across important trade route. Satish Chandra says :

> Thus, the main differences between Shivaji and Mughals centred around the territory and *mansab* which was to be granted to Shivaji, and later, around the claim for 'chauth and sardeshmukhi. For strategic and economic reasons, the Mughaals were unwilling to see a powerful Maratha state arise on their southern border, on the flank of the vital trade route to the west coast. Financial stringency made its impossible to satisfy the ambition of Shivaji, except at the expense of the Deccan State.[111]

Aurangzeb and Shivaji were not fighting for defence of their respective religions is also proved by the fact that both had chosen allies from the other religious groups respectively. While Aurangzeb army sent to fight, Shivaji the latter had the backing of the Muslim Kingdoms of Bijapur and Golcunda and others Muslim opposed to the Mughals Rule. Also, as Aurangzeb had to give grants to some Hindu temples despite his personal bigotry as a political expedient, Shivaji also had to show tolerance towards Muslims to win their support. There were in Aurangzebs employment some of Shivaji's relatives like his son-in-law Achalaji, one of his uncle Arjuji etc.[112] Similarly there were some Muslims in Shivaji's army and navy had a good number of trusted and prominent Muslim Officers.[113] In view of these facts it would be utterly wrong to project the conflict between Shivaji and Aurangzeb as religious conflict.

The foregoing discussion since to clarify that certain historians have not only misinterpreted our past history but have also over simplified it by singling out religion as the central motivating force. History, is far more complex and barring a few religion exceptions has hardly played the role of history maker. Apparently purely religious acts like demolition of temples or mosques too have for deeper motives other than those of religious. In fact in the final analysis important historical events are determined by number of complex factors like geopolitical, socio-economic, religio-political and several others. It is different thing that in a particular instance one or the other factor (and in some cases even religious factor) might play more decisive role than other factors. Thus each important historical event must be placed properly within totality of the situation.

Conversion to Islam in Mughal India

Religion here played a very great part in the evolution of human civilization and culture. They developed as a set of beliefs concerning the cause, nature and purpose of the universe and grew as an organized system of beliefs that bound people to become a close knit society. Very often the religions spread out from the lands of their origin.

Since around the middle of the 16th C, conversion to Islam in Mughal India has been carried out great extent through the activities of traveling merchants, medicants, Sufis, and Muslim popular preachers, as has been the case in parts of Indonesia and other areas of East Asia and Africa.

Although historian Mohammad Habib, S.M. Ikrim, and A.B.M. Habibullah were deeply conscious of the role of Islam as a revolutionary force confronting the caste – ridden social and legal structures of medieval India, they did not produce sufficient evidence to substantiate their general statements. Irfan Habib therefore remarks 'there is no evidence of result from the Muslims upon the caste system; not even any revolt from within.[114] Richard Maxwell Eaton totally rejects the theory of 'social liberation' on the ground that it is a 'fallacy' to read 'the values of the present into the peoples or events of the past.[115] He further asks in somewhat hubristic terms, if we are to assume that, before Muslim contact, 'the untouchables of India possessed, as through they were familiar with the writings of jean – Jacques Rosesseau or Thomas Jefferson, some innate notion of the fundamental equality of all men denied them by a Brahmanical tyranny.[116]

On the other hand, Eaton is at pains to emphasize “self conscious adoption of Arab culture’ as a ‘a central paradox’ of the reform process.[117] His thesis about ‘adhesion’ and ‘reform’[118] actually points to the dichotomy between two constantly interacting forces which Annemarie Schimmel calls ‘mystico – syncretistic’ and prophetic separatistic.[119] The underlying thesis is that it is not the socalled ‘formal Islam’ but the ‘aura of holiness’ acquired by the Sufis in the Hindu environment that attracted Indians. This idea characterizes work written under the influence of J. Spencer Trimingham.[120]

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Chapter 2

SUFI AND BHAKTI MOVEMENTS

In the medieval period, religion provided the frame work of society at the community and state levels. The state allowed intellectual activity to grow, to begin with, but later curtailed it for reasons of state policy, even though confined to discrete groups and made subject of philosophical reasoning and logical disputation. As a result, religions failed to play the role of bringing about a harmonious process of living people therefore, had to develop their own beliefs and practices. Sufi and *Bhakti* represented people's revolt against the ossified practices, in search of, and as an endeavor to bring harmony in life. Sufism played the most important role in working out the great synthesis.

Sufi Movement

The origin of Sufism lay in mysticism (Tassawuf) and one could discern from the very beginning two trends - natural mysticism and the esoteric.

An interesting feature of introduction of Sufism in India, as Nizami pointed out, was that it was introduced at the very beginning of the establishment of Muslim role and the latter's rise and spread all over India. In other words, it developed in a period when free thought and scientific research and development had been suppressed in west and central Asia in the early tenth century as was pointed out by Professor Mohammad Habib in the introduction to Nizami's book.[1]

The Sufi stream came to India when Sufi thought was delinked from natural mysticism or was not playing an active role in bringing about any social transformation as the Qarmatrians or Shah Inayat tried to do. It was

institutionalized into different *silisilahs* and each confined itself to a *vilayat* (i.e. domain). The major *silisilahs* in India were the *Chisti, Qadri, Naqshbandi* and *Suharwardy* Abul Fazl in *Ain-i-Akbari* gave a list of all that existed during his time, with some details leading *Sufis.*[2]

The role of *Sufis* must be understood in proper social context in order to better understand and appreciate their valuable contribution. Analysing the social role of the *Sufis* K. Damodaran says :

Sufism was spiritual reflection of the growing social conflicts. The *Sufis* disliked the vices and luxurious living of the upper classes, which violated the Quranic precepts of simplicity and the brotherhood of man. They saw that Islam was becoming more and more subordinate to the state, and that the *Ulema*, the Qazis and the *mullahs* representing religious orthodoxy were exploiting the Quranic doctrines to uphold and justify a social system based on oppression. But, at the same time, they found themselves in a helpless position, unable to mobilize the people and fight for justice and the purity of Islam.[3]

The Sufis adopted many local practices and made them an integral part of their cult. Some of these Sufi saints were half *sadhus*. They spoke local dialects and to a great extent Indianised Islam. In this contest to quote Khwaja Hasan Nizami :

> "According to the custom of Sufis, it was necessary to celebrate the death anniversary of Hazrat Khwaza Ajmeri. The elderly disciples (mashaikh) wanted new Muslims to take part in it and their participation should also impress non-Muslim. And, by contemplating over the nature and habits of Hindus, they had understood that they were very found of rituals of their taste. The consolidation of Islam among them was possible only by

> suitably adopting those rituals which were prevalent among them (i.e. neo-muslims) during the days of idol worship so that they do not consider Islam to be alien to their taste and way of life".[4]

Hasan Nizami, records many devices used to convert the Hindu mases to the faith of Islam. He discovered a rest called *Parnami Panth* in Gujrat whose followers are Half-Hindu and Half-Muslim. Their holy scripture is called *Qulzum Sarup.* Its language is a mixture of Arabic, Sindhi, Hindi, Gujrati etc. They consider idol worship as infidels.[5]

Its was much easier for the people of India, who, far ages had belief in the theory of transmigration, to accept Islam couched in that idiom. Some peripheral and heterodox sects of Islam in Gujrat like the Bohra and Khoja (both Shia Ismaili sects) successfully employed such concepts to attract more and more people thoroughly immersed in native traditions towards them. Another interesting example of synergetic thought is that of the Bohra saint – poet Syedi Sadiq Aloi Syedi Sadiq Ali wrote didactic poetry in Gujrati and employed local idiom and many Sanskrit words like Sad Guru etc.[6] He also employed the concept of transmigration of in this respect.

The *Nizaris* (a sub-sect of the Ismaili Shias popularly known in India as the Khwaja Muslims) also adopted purely Indian idiom and religious concepts for preaching their faith in India. Pir Imamuddin, one of the Nizari missionaries of Gujrat founded *Imamshai Sat Panth* (i.e The True Path). The *Nizari Dais* in the guise of popular Hindu saints ambulated around singing *bhajans* and giving people the good tidings of two new *awtar* of *Kal-Yugi* Hazrat Muhammad and Hazrat Ali. The conversion of the local people to the new faith used to be kept secret and the proselytized were called *Guptis* (i.e.

hidden). These *Guptis* wore required to perform all the Hindus rituals and only secretly practiced their new faith. In some of the sacred books of the *Khoja Om is "Ali and Ali is Om.*[7] It is interesting to note that there is close resemblance between the way 'Ali' is written in Arabic script and om is written in Sanskrit and the Nizaris write 'Ali, with little modification in their sacred books so as to look like om.[8]

The *Mahdawiya* sect associated with the name of Wahid Mahmud, appeared in the early 13^{th} century. He claimed himself to be a Mahdi who could lend the people to the right path. He asserted that the religion of Mahmud being obsolete and abrogated must be replaced by a new dispensation. The followers of Wahid are called Mahadawiya. They regard him as their Prophet, venerate the sun and called it their *Qiblah*; they have their prayer, which they chant with their face turned towards the sun.[9]

The *Raushaniya*, or "the enlightened," was a Sufi sect founded by an Afghan, Mian Bayazid Ansari, who was styled as *Pir-i-Raushan*, or the Enlightened Pir.[10] The Akhund Darweza, a venerated Afghan saint, dubbed him in derision *Pir-i-Tariq*, the *Darkened Pir*, and the adherents of the sect were nick named *Tariqis.*[11] Bayazid Ansari was born in the Punjab and flourished in the middle of the sixteenth century. At first a devout Muslim he afterwards abandoned the exterior practices of Islam and devoted himself to mediation. His Saying, several of which are quoted in the *Dabistan*, express sound reason, pure morality and fervent piety. In the spirit of his nation and time, and for self defence he took up arms against the Mughals. His history and that of his sons is carried to the middle of the seventeenth century. It is

interesting to note that Mian Bayazid composed a great number of works in four languages, viz., Arabic, Persian, Pashto and Hindi (i.e. Sanskrit) and the gospel of this sect, Khairul-Biyan, is to be found in all four languages.[12]

The regions of Sind and Gujrat saw the emergence of another very interesting sect – *Satpanthis*, This sect was founded as a branch of Ismalism. But with the passage of time the sect moved further away from its Islamic foundations. *Satpanthi* preachers said that *Hinduism* and *Islam* were similar way of obtaining God, but Islam was a higher stage, while the Quran was the fifth and the last of the *Vedas*. They had a negative attitude towards idol worship, but adopted the Hindu postulate of rebirth. They considered that the main aim of human life was to free itself from *Khuda* or *Brahma*. Among the rich library texts of this sect there is a work called *Jannatpuri* which describes one of their spiritual leaders, Imam Shah, visiting hell and then, heaven in the company of one Vir Chandan. While in hell all sorts of sinners are detained, his heaven is populated not only by Muslim righteous men, but by the noble heroes of the Mahabharata.[13]

Mughals ideas and approaches towards Sufis of India

In the middle of the eleventh century, Sufis reached the part of the north west India under Ghaznavid control. The following centuries saw the arrival of many men of God belonging to different brotherhoods or following different 'Ways', There were the Chistis lovers of music and poetry, whose center, Ajmer became very important for the Mughals. There were also the sober Suhra wardiyya, who were initially concentrated in Sind, the Punjab and Bengal. Ali-yi Hamdani led the kusrawiyya into Kashmir. There was an active

branch of this group, the *Firdausiya*, in Bihar and Bengal. Babur visited *Hamdanais* grave in Khuttalan during his military campaigns. For a time the *Shattariyya* played an important role in central India, while the central *Ssian Naqshbandiya*, who were averse to music and dancing, were increasingly important to the Mughals in the sub-continent. In addition these were numerous smaller groups, venerators of particular holymen, hybrids with elements from Hindu *Bhakti* groups and so on. When Babur and his associates came to India there was adazling array of different mystical paths. The theosophy of the Andalusian Ibn Arabi (died 1240) was spreading in India at more or less the same time. Before this theosophy came to be generally accepted these were lengthy disputes between the different masters. Their belief in the 'oneness of being', often designated as either pantheism or monism. coloured the poetry of all the languages of the subcontinent, and inspired mystically inclined scholars to compose numerous commentaries and original works. A text book written by the strait-laced Badauni, *Najat ar-rashid*, reveals the surprising fact that he too was a follower of the 'great master.[14] The most famous of the teachers in India was Muhibbullah of Allahabad who followed Ibn Arbi, and who was venerated by Prince Dara Shikoh.

Babur's family had a long standing connection with the Naqshbandis, going back to Bahauddin Naqshband, who died in Bukhara in 1389. His most important successor, Khwaja Ahrar (died 1490), was one of the most powerful men in Central Asia at the time, and Babur's father was a follower of his Members of his family came with him to India and some of them married into the Mughal family.[15]

Babur's son Humayun was a great venerator of holy men, visited the shrine of the leader of the chistis, Abdul Quddues Gangohi (died 1538), and during his wandering in excile in Iran, he visited all the accessible mausoleums, including the shrine of 'Abdullah-i Ansari (died in 1089) in Gazurgah, near Heart. The sufi with the greatest influence on the emperor was Shah Phul or Bhlul, who claimed to be descended from the great Persian mystical poet Faridddin 'Attar, and who was renowned for his exorcism. Shah Phul was killed by Humayun's brother Hindal, who feased his great influence over Humayun. Shah Phul brother Muhammad Ghaush Gwailiari (died 1562) had an even greater influence on many Muslims, and the Shattari order which he represented remained active for many years, for example in Burhanpur. The great theologian Wajihuddin Gujarati spoke in his defence.[16] Akbar does not appear to have shown any great interest in these powerful religious figures a somewhat astonishing fact, which is mentioned by both Badauni and Abul Fazl.

Akbar too believed deeply in the *dervishes*, the representative of mystical Islam. In 1564 he performed the first pilgrimage on foot to Muinuddin Chisti's mausoleum in Ajmer and repeated this act frequently, thus in 1569 to offer thanks for the conquest of chitor, the Rajput stronghold. It is said that even in this conquest he was supported by a Suhrwardy saint, Miran Muhammad Shah (d. 1604 in Lahore). The conquest was celebrated by Badauni with the verse:

> "And a happy day was it for the vultures and crows –
> Glory to Him who multiplieth food for his cratures".[17]



Fig. 1. The hermit Shaykh Salim Chisti in a hermitage with his tame lion, c. 1700.

Till 1579 the emperor visited the Shrine in Ajmer almost every year,

> "and daily according to his custom held in that sacred shrine by night intercourse with holy, learned, and sinceremen, and séances for dancing and Sufism took place, and the musicians and singers, each one of whom was a paragon without rival, striking their nails into the veins of the heart used to rend the soul with their mournful cries, and dirhams and dinars were showered down like raindrops".[18]

Akbar's first surviving son Salim was born from a Rajput princess on 31 August 1569, as a result of the prayers and blessings of Salim Chisti (d. 1571)[19], one of Farid Ganj – Shakar's descendents, the chronogram of whose death is Shaikh-I-hukama, Shaikh of Sages' or Shaikh hukkam 'Shaikh of rulers' Out of gratitude, Akbar erected a sanctuary for the saint, around which the city of Fatehpur Sikri was built, a city of red sandstone which seems to reflect the high soaring mystical feelings of the emperor. The enormous gateway is visible for miles and leads the visitor to Salim Chistis delicate white



Fig. 2 Nar Singh, 'Akbar presiding over a religious debate in the *ibadatkhana* with the Jesuit Fathers Rudolph Aquaviva and Francis Henriquez in the city of Fatehpur Sikri in 1578, c 1578-9

marble tombs and finally to the *Ibadat Khana*, the 'house of worship', where the emperor held his meetings with the representatives of different religions – Muslims, Hindus, Christians, and Zorastrians. Strange people, too came to Agra and Fatehpur Sikri in those years; the influx of Shia poets and preachers from Iran and Iraq continued and even increased. Among them was Mulla Muhammad of Yazd who 'got the name of Yazidi and tried hard to make the emperor a Shia.[20] It was *Ibadat Khana*, as Abul Fazal records, that 'bigoted ulama and the routine lawyers were shamed.[21]

In 1578 an ecstatic experience contributed to the ruler's shifting towards an all-embracing religion instead of pure, orthodox Islam. Finally in 1579 Akbar issued the famous *mahzr* called by Vincent Smith his 'infallibility decree', which gave recognition to the emperor's power of *ijtihad*; that means he gained the right to exercise his own judgement and to issue orders on matters of religion as well as politics, based on the principles of equality and justice. The just ruler, Sultan-i-adil, was placed in this document above the *mujtahid*.

The document was drawn up by Shaikh Mubarak, and the *Sadrus sadur* 'Abdunnabi as well as other learned men were forced to sign it. But both 'Abdunnabi and *Makhdum ul mulk* (who disliked each other) were ordered to go for pilgrimage in this very year. The incredibly wealthy *Makhdum ul Mulk*[22] died or was assassinated in Ahmadabad on his return, while Abdunnabi was imprisoned slightly later (he had a Brahman executed against Akbar wish) and murdered in prison. Two years after the proclamation of the *mahzr the Din-i-Ilahi* was created, which may be called an order rather than a religion. Among its nineteenth select members, only one was a Hindu. In the regulation of this

eclectic movement the noblest ideas of various religious traditions were combined, for instance the prohibition of sensual lust, deceit, slander and oppression, ideas that suggest influences of Jain *ahimsa* and catholic ideals of celibacy. A central facet of the *Din-i-Ilahi* is the veneration of the light, whether the sun or a perpetual fire, which may have its roots in Zoroastrian practices. Abul Fazl revived the Iranian idea of the *Farr-i-Izadi*, the Khwarena or glory, which is the divine sign of true royalty, and recognizing this splendour in Akbar, therefore depicts 'His Majesty as the spiritual guide of the people'.[23]

Abul Fazl was also responsible for the formulation of the 'four degrees' of absolute adherence to Akbar's person: one had to place at his disposal property, life, honour and faith. Badauni whose former admiration for Akbar turns into aversion after the promulgation of the *Din-i-Ilahi*, as his former friendship with Faizi changes suddenly into hatred, reviles with poisonous pen one of the 'possessors of the four degree in faith, the reprobate apostate, Sharif of Amul who 'chewed the cud of a host of foolish stories and is now one of the apostles of this Majesty's religion in Bengal.[24]

The *Din-i-Ilahi* was condemned by some authors, following Badauni, as apostasy from Islam; others regard it rather as a heresy within Islam. In any case, Akbar himself denied any claims to prophethood or divinity, even though the religious formula *Allahu akbar* might have confused people since it could be interpreted as 'Akbar is God', thus pointing to the emperor's divine nature. The *Din-i-Ilahi* has also been called 'a heterodox personality cult in which Akbar assumed the role of the *Insane-i-kamil*, the perfect Man of whom the theoreticians of Sufism had long dreamt. Thus, Shaikh Tajauddin, a mystic of

the Ibn 'Arabi school, who 'introduced arguments concerning the unity of existence as idle Sufis discuss, and which eventually lead to licences and open heresy, claimed that the expression *Insane-i-Kamil* referred to the caliph of the age[25] - and that was Akbar. Again, the *Din-i-Ilahi* was considered as 'solar monotheism'; or one may find in its tenents traces of the Ishraqi school of Suhrwardi Muqtul (d. 1191), who had paid with his life for his tendency to unite in his philosophical system mystico-gnostic trends of Iran, Greek and Islamic origin, and whose mysticism of illumination – the *hikmat al ishraq* – was not unknown to the Muslim intellectuals of India.

Akbar's ideal of *Sulh-i Kull*, peace with every one', manifested itself in various ways. To be sure, he too continued to annex neighbouring territories; but in home politics he tried to give the Hindus a large share in the administration.

It was natural for Akbar to try to gain the support of the majority of his subjects, the Hindus; for the reason he attempted to understand their culture and religion better than any of the preceding kings of Delhi.

Akbar was said to have to very keen on having letters from the Bihari Sufi Sharafuddin Maneri (died 1380) read to him, as they taught a sensible, wise form of piety. Akbar however, was most strongly drawn to the Chistis. The rulers of the dynasties preceding the Mughals had also venerated the Chisti holy man Nizamuddin Auliya of Delhi (died 1325).

Akbar once visited the mausoleum of Nizamuddin master, Farid Ganj-i-Shakar in Pak pattan in the Punjab, And for many years he visited the shrine to Muinuddin Chishti in Ajmer.[26] Akbar is depicted in a miniature in the golden

yellow robes of the chistis, which is evidence of his close connection to this order, which became even closer after the birth of Jahangir.[27] The most prominent of Akbar critics was Ahmad Sirhindi (*mujaddid-i-alf-i-thani*), who also frequently appears, during Jahangirs time. He was a naqshbandi, and like many members of this 'strait-laced' order, he began his theological career by uniting on anti-Shia tract. Akbars tolerance and his syncreticism were completely at odds with Ahmad's narrow conception of the true Islam.[28] Sirhindi evolved his own theories to counter those of the increasingly influential Ibn Arbi. Whereas this Great master's followers proclaimed that *hama ust*, Every thing is He Ahmad Sirhindi's were to say of him that *hama az ust*, Everything is from Him', instead of *wahdat-al-wajud*, the 'unity of Being', he substituted *wahdat-ash-shuhud*, unicity of contemplation'. His claims were unacceptably large, and Jahangir, upon learning of Ahmad's criticism of his father's religious policies, had him brought before him. He was therefore put in the cave of Anira I Singh Daln and incarcerated in the fontress of Gwalior.[29] However, while locked up in Gwalior, Shayakh Ahmad had experience of the mighty majesty of God. He was released after only a year, and treated quite well by Jahangir, who gave him two thousand rupees, after which he continued to unite and preach until his death in 1624. It is not certain whether Aurangzeb was a disciple of Pir Muhammad Masum, Sirhindi son, but it is a possibility.[30]

The role of the *Naqshbandi* in India increased in importance. Muhammad Nasir Andalib's son, Mir Durd became the first great mystical poet in Urdu. There were others *Naqshbandiya* who were also active at that time in Delhi, the most prominent being Shah Walliullah, the son of lawyer who had been involved in compiling the *Fatawa-i-Alamgiri*.[31] He was born in

1703, and had spend several years in Mecca. After his return to Delhi, he attempted to bring about a survival of Islam. Shah Walliulah's great Arabic work, *Hujjat Allah al-baligha*, attempted to account for the plight of Muslims in India, pointing to the mismanaged economy, financial problems and neglecting of the agricultural regions.

The mughal government did not communicate all that much with the great intellectuals, but they did expect their advice. However, the influence of the *Naqshbandi* reformer continued in India even after the collapse of the Mughal empire, and a branch of this *naqshbandis* still survives in Delhi.

The *Chistiyya* also continued to play a role. Along side these some what mutually antagonistic brotherhoods, another community was gaining in importance, namely the *Qadriyya*, the oldest Sufi way.[32] In India they gained their followers in the South (Tanjore is still an important center). Later on in the Mughal era, in the fifteenth century, Qadiris settled in Sind and in the southern Punjab. The *Tariqias* rose in significant in Jahangirs era; Mian Mir, who came from Sind, had settled in Lahore in Akbars time. Jahangir was very impressed by the holy man[33], who then came to contact with the young Dara Shikoh. Mian Mir died in 1635. Dara Shikoh and his sister Jahanara became disciples of Mian Mirs successor, Mullah Shah Badakhshi. Tawakkul Beg, who was another faithful disciple of Mullah Shah, acted as a messenger between his master and Shahjahan in Kashmir.

There were many mystical groups and currents during the Mughal time, but only one others merits a brief mention: the Rishis in Kashmir. Any one who visited Srinagar will have come across the grave of Baba Rishi in Gulmarg, in a fragrant pine forest near the sources of the Jhelum River. Baba

Rishi was one of the Muslim Rishi who were even in contact with Akbar. Nuruddin is Regarded as the founder of the Rishis, introducing the new spiritual path in 1589. They lived ascetic lines, practiced breath control, planted fruit trees, and cared for their fellow creatures in tranquility and humility. The love of women is paramount in a few Sufi scriptures from the Mughal period; however, it is not clear whether these contain traces of Kashmiri Tantrism[34].



Fig 3 Dara Shikoh visiting a sufi faqir, c. 1640-50

What is certain is that *Sufism* permeated Indian Islam to great Islam to great extent, and right up to the end of the Mughal period the holy festival of *urs* of Moinuddin Chisti as well as Abdeul Qadir Jilani, was celebrated in Dlhi in the Lal Qila (Red Fort).

Bhakti Movement

The most powerful characteristic of the medieval age in India was the *Bhakti* movement. The movement began in the sixth-seventh century in south India with the rise of Hindu devotional cults, gradually spread throughout the country, and lasted till the sixteenth – seventeenth century[35]. Most of these cults were heterodox and reflective of an inner social ferment.

Dr. Tara Chand felt that one of the possible influences might have been the advent of Islam. Muslims came to the western coast of south India in the eighth century and to the eastern coast by the tenth century, and by this time they had come to acquire considerable social and political influence.

> It may therefore, be premised without overstraining facts that if, in the development of Hindu religion in the south, any foreign elements are found which make their appearance after the seventh century, which cannot be accounted for by the national development of Hinduism itself, they may with much probability be ascribed to the influence of Islam.[36]

The *Bhakti* movement in India, by and large, was marked by (i) the rejection of the then existing ritual hierarchy and Brahmanical superiority'

(ii) The use of vernacular in preference to Sanskrit (the language of the elite); and (iii) the emergence of the low-caste non-literate' persons like Rameja Dasar, Pillai Uranga, Villi Dasar and Kanak Dasar in the south and Kabir,

Raidas, and Dadu in the north as great spiritual leaders. There was large scale participation of peasantry, artisans, and other lower classes as well as of ritually inferior but economically powerful groups like merchants and craftsmen in these devotional movements.

Just as a Sufism embraced a variety of ideas, with the name *sufi* given to men of different social, ethical and even doctrinal ideas, *Bhakti* too was open to many interpretations. The very principal of all people being equally dear to God was used both for denouncing the caste system and for glorifying it. Thus *Bhakti* was, it seems, not a movement, but a complex of movements, school of ideas and trends. The same view is expressed by Savitri Chandra and Krishna Kumar Sharma.[37] The ideology of social protest, with which some Soviet and Indian scholars associate *Bhakti*, was significant, but not the only direction *Bhakti* took, for the heterogeneity and contradiction of ideas within *Bhakti* were many.

The notion of *Bhakti* as a movement is intenable because of other reasons too. Even for its most radical thinkers, who combined *Bhakti* with social protest, the main aim was to save an individual soul, not improve society and one has to agree with Savitri Chandra that 'it's objective was individual salvation and mystical union with God, rather than change in the living conditions of the masses.[38]

The religious reformist and school of thought in medieval India have been the subject of study of many scholars in India and elsewhere. According to Russian scholar Autonova '*Bhakti*' was an anti-feudal movement which in the form of religious reformist ideas reflected the struggle of the toiling

masses, which was guided at the beginning by the city and money lending elite of Hindu society. In Ashrafan's view, 'Medieval *Bhakti* was an ideology of the townsfolk protest against the social and caste privileges of religious and non-religious feudal, a movement that grew with the feudal society and was a inevitable result of its development. As far as *Sufism* is concerned, the scholars approach is less unified, and trends of different socio-cultural meaning can be distinguished with it.[39]

To determine what *Bhakti* was, we should start with two general divisions of it into the *sagun* and *nirgun* traditions. *Sagun* means 'having qualities' and possessing a concretized form. Following the general idea of a unified Deity, *Sagun Bhakti* supposed that God should be worshiped in same anthropomorphous form of either Rama or Krishna. Among the followers of this traditions were such humaniries of medieval Indian culture as Vallabh Charya, the founder of the celebrated '*Pushti Marg'* community in Braj Members of this community consisted of the poets of the 'Ashtachap', among whom Surdas was especially famous, and other great poets like Vidyapati, Jais and Rashkhan, Tulsidas, Mirabai, Narsi Maheta, the galaxy of Marathi Varkari saints and the Bengali luminary Chaitnya.

No less a popularity was enjoyed by the communities and saints of *nirgun Bhakti* (*nirgun* means devoid of qualities). Among its most celebrated representatives were Kabir, Ravidas (Raidas), Garibdas, Malukdas, Akho Bhagat, Charandas, Dadu Dayal and others. Early *Sikhism* of Nanak had many features similar to *nirgun Bhakti*. The adherents of this tradition followed strict monotheism and believed that Rama, Krishna and Allah were the names of the

same God, which was understood by them as an Absolute, devoid of any visible form or life story, and hence no temples, rituals and priests were needed to worship him. The whole of the *nirgun Bhakti* literature objects to '*Pathar Puja*' or stone worship.[40]

Both traditions of *Bhakti* were a challenge to the orthodox religion because many moral, social and ethical categories were critically reviewed by the saints. For instance, the traditional idea of the *mundane* world being *maya* (illusion) and God being the 'Reality', was re-considered by the *Bhaktas* God, was according to them, dissolved in the *mundane* being, hence to know God there was no need to renounce the world in the way the ascetics did.

According to some scholars, medieval *Bhakti* emerged as a response to the invasion of Islam. According to K.M. Panikkar, '*Bhakti*.... provided calm to the bleeding soul of Hinduism in Northern India during the period of Muslim Occupation'. Similar views on *Bhakti* were held by Joshi, Krishna Rao and others.[41] Such an estimate does not agree with the facts of history, for if *Bhakti* was a response to the challenge of Islam, then we cannot account for the development of *Bhakti* in many regions of India especially in the south, much before the Muslim invasion.

Bhakti indeed was an answer to a challenge, but not to the challenge of Islam. It owed its development to many important changes in Indian society and culture. These changes occurred very gradually, sometimes in different directions, and none of them can be defined as the only important one.

The advent of Islam made the situation even more complicated. Living within a well defined caste structure, the Muslims got involved in an intricate

system of social divisions and ethnic groups. The dogma of Islamic practices, cultural traditions and values influenced the Hindu society in various ways and vice versa. All this led to the necessity of some change in the traditional outlook of both communities.

The development of *Bhakti* was closely connected with the development of medieval culture, especially the urban culture. In the streets and *Bazaars* of the thickly populated cities, people of all castes and religions rubbed shoulders with each other in every day business, sorrow and joys. Vidyapati (the maithli poet of Madhubani district of Northern Bihar) says that in the city throngs 'ones' caste mark was transferred on the others for head; Brahman's *Janev* (kind of ritual thread) found itself on an untouchables neck.[42] It became more and more difficult to maintain ones caste purity, though the basic idea survived.

The influence of *Bhakti* communities was very strong. They played a great role in the development of not only social thought and religion, but also music, literature and fine arts. Many *Bhakti* preachers as well as *Sufis* traveled through out India and spread their ideas in different regions. On the one hand, as Ashrafyan has rightly observed, the spread of the *Bhakti* ideas to different parts and ethnic groups of India testifies to their similar social development.[43] One the other hand, the spread of *Bhakti* became a part of India's cultural integrity and unity.

The influence of *Bhakti* extended not only to Sufism, but even to a religion that seemed to be insensitive to reformist ideas, Jainism.

In this chapter we harbour no ambitious to discuss all the aspects of *Bhakti* and Sufism. We shall only chalk out some important features problems, and analyse the attitudes of *Bhaktas* and Sufis. Till the end of the sixteenth century and the beginning of the seventeenth century the only way to understand *Bhakti* ideas was through the numerous sects, communities, and fraternities, which evolved around a spiritual leader.

Thus approximately up to the first half of the seventeenth century the main key to the understanding of *Bhakti* ideas was through the sects and fraternities, peaceful gatherings of submissive followers of *nirguna Bhakti* or *Sagun Bhakti*. Feudal authorities both Hindu and Muslim, who were sympathetic to these sects, some times granted them lands and money.[44]

These sects and communities coasted for many centuries and some of them flourish even today. But by about the mind-seventeenth century the religious reformist school of thought moved into a new stage. From the traditional practices of peaceful discussions and preaching the ideology of *Bhakti* became transformed into the ideology of anti-Mughal struggle. This process coincided with the crisis and disintegration of the Mughal empire. The growth of apposition to Aurangzeb's policies as well as ethnic consolidation of same people of India led to freedom movements which were in need of some doctrinal, religious and ethical basis. Such a basis was provided by *Bhakti* ideas, which were transferred to meet the new requirements.

Historically the growth of the *Bhakti* movement can be divided into two phases: the first, from its early development in South India to the 13th century; the second, from the thirteenth century to the seventeenth, when in north India it came in contact with Islam, was inspired by its monotheism and stimulated

by its challenge, and developed against it a system of self defence and self-preservation for Hindu spirituality by borrowing Islam's monotheistic egalitarianism.

The School, Centre and their Leaders of *Bhakti* Movement

The *Varkari panth* was an important center of *Bhakti* in Maharashtra. This school of *Bhakti* worshipped the local deity *Vithosa* who was supposed to be an incarnation of Krishna. The main center of *Varkari* tradition was the city of Pandharpur, to which the devotees still make annual pilgrimages. This school of *Bhakti* gave birth to a galaxy of poets like Namder, Nashari, Bahinabai, Chokha, Mela, and of course Eknath and Tukaram.[45]

In Maharashtra during the 17th century the most influential of Maratha saints was Tuka Ram (b. 1608) whose conception of God was very much like that of Kabir and who occasionally used Sufi terms in his hymns. Sukaram, who is generally believed to have inspired Shivaji as his spiritual guide, does not seem to have shared his dislike of Islam or of the Muslims .Some of his verses could have been written only by one who believed not only in one God but also in the mission of the prophet.[46]

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As observed by the Russian Reisner and some other Indian scholars, Maharashtrian *Bhakti* had the biggest support in the villages, since urban life in Maharashtra was not so developed as composed to other parts of India. Because of this reason, as Reisner says, *Bhakti* there was closer to the ideas of Tulsidas, than to those of Kabir (mainly in social aspects).[48]

In the doctrine of Ramdas the central place was occupied by the idea of '*Maharashtra dharma*'. This was the idea of liberation from the Mughals and consolidation of all the Marathas. But here, there was a contradiction Ramdas appealed to Shivaji and his heirs with words that became the main slogan for the anti Mughal struggle in Maharashtra: to unite all the Marathas and to promote '*Maharashtra dharma*'. On the other hand, this patriotic idea of the '*Maharashtra dharma*' meant in practice nothing but the restoration of the traditional, centuries old values of the pre Muslim state. So it was not by mere chance that the Marathi literature of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries idolized Shivaji as in carnation of the hero King Vikramaditiya or even as God Shiva himself, who was born as Maratha leader to restore dharma and the authority of the Vedas.[49]

Maharashtra was not so developed economically as, far instance, Gujarat or Bengal, but it was here that the process of ethnic consolidation began quite early as the twelfth century the Marathi language had pushed Sanskrit out of the administrative and literary sphere.

It has been accurately observed by some scholars like Reisner and P.V. Ranade that one of the most important social process spearheaded the Maratha movement, was the feudalization of the rural elite watandars who began to

press for a dominant role in Maharashtra and thus inevitably clashed with the Mughals. According to Ranade 'the dominant group of the maratha watandars to consolidate its position among its own people and experts its power over India.[50]

The development of the anti-Mughal struggle in the Punjab and the ideology of this (Sikh) movement was very different from the liberation war. The reason for this were social, cultural and ethnic.

The *Bhakti* many, both in the south and in the north could not be considered as a single unified movement; it had many facets and its sources were diverse. *Bhakti* literature is an important part of Tamil literature. It is non-vedic and its traces are found in Buddhist and Jain literature as well[51]

Different social, cultural and political factors seems to have played a role in the origin and promotion of *Bhakti* in different parts of India. The power of Brahman and Kashtriya castes in different regions and the emergence of new technologies and professions seem to have also played some role. In addition, a major factors could have been the emergence of Islam and *Sufism* in India, with their concept of equality and absence of castes. The interval about 500 years between the beginnings of *Bhakti* in the south and north might have been due to different political and social conditions, but this might also have been due to early arrival and impact of Islam in the south as compared to the north.

Dadu Dayal (1544-1603)

Dadu was a spiritual descendent of Kabir. He was a contemporary of Akbar. Among *Bhakti* poets of the eclectic group Dadu Dayal (1544-1603)

came nearest to Sufism.[52] Like Kabir he rejected the authority of Hindu and Muslim scriptures, denounced the priest craft and believed passionately in the worship of God as Ram.[53]

Through out identified with the tradition of Kabir, Gorakhnath and others, he enter the court under the insignia of Kabir – uttering the names of Ram, Rahim and Allah – further aligning Akbar with that same tradition.

Akbar, hearing of Dadu and impressed by Dadu's pupil, repeatedly asks him to come to the court. Since Dadu was a preacher who covered a large area in northern India, the language of his verses must have varied according to the audience he was addressing Dadu's verses have been preserved in the traditions – the oral (maghazia) and the written (Kaghazia).[54] The verses communicated orally have not yet been compiled.

One of the most significant concepts which emerge from Dadus *Granthawali* is the concept of the Guru. "Without the Guru even a hundred thousands moons and millions of suns cannot enlighten man's dark corners."[55] This concept of the Guru – on the one hand holding absolute power over his disciples and on the other being benevolent towards them – corresponds remarkably closely to say, Abul Fazls concept of the sovereign.

Dadu fully accepts the social function of all classes and groups in the society of his day. In fact he used the smile of God for almost every one of them in different verses thus elevating their position in society. The *Dadupanthi* sect was synergetic in the beginning one of its early exponents being Rajjabdas, a re-convert to Hinduism.[56] Gradually it transformed itself from an esoteric to a militant orientation under the influence of the *vairagis*

and the Sikhs.[57] Towards the end of the eighteenth century it led a predatory existence in the area around Jaipur. But of the aims and spirit of the early movement scarcely a vestige remained.[57]

Bir Bhan (b. 1543)

A contemporary of Dadu founded the *Satnami sect* which demounced caste system. The followers of the Satnami sect married within their own sect and believed in monotheists. In Sundardas the eclectic school of *Bhakti* returned to orthodoxy; though he enjoyed the patronage of Muslim nobles he was essentially a scholar of Sanskrit. His *Sundar Vitasa* draws purely from Sanskrit sources.[58]

The difference between the ecletic and the orthodox Ramaite *Bhakti* school is that whereas the former worshiped God as Ram, the latter worshiped Rama, the son of Dasratha king of Ayodha as God.

Tulsidas (1532-1623)

The great representative of the orthodox Ramaite school (Saguna) was Tulsidas (1532-1623) who is said to have enjoyed the patronage of Abdul Rahim Khan-i-Khanan, but wrote exclusively for the Hindus without any attempt at eclecticism. His great contribution was *Ram Carita Manas*, the religious epic of the life of Rama, and in its spiritual significance a work as great in its way as Valmikis Ramayan, and more popular. He regarded all eclecticism including that of Kabir and Akbar as hypocritical. 'Kal yog (evil time) has swallowed the Dharma (religion), scriptures are lost; hypocrites have established religious sects at will.... Brahmins sels the Vedas; the rulers have no sense of morality.[59] Neither the farmers has land nor the beggar alms,

merchants have no income, menids no jobs; every one is hungry and distressed..... This is due to Ravana of poverty. 'O' Ram kill this demon of poverty as you killed Ravan.[60]

Chaitanya (1485-1533)

In Bengal Chaitanya (1485-1533) started a *Bhakti* movement in the form of Krishna work ship. He believed firmly in devotion to God, Krishna in his case, and rejected the ritual and caste system of Hinduism. The main purpose of religious life was the attainment of an ecstatic feeling in the love of God, which was helped by music, this feeling could be any men whatever his creed or caste, provided he devoted himself to the love of God.[61]

It has recently been pointed out that after becoming a sanyasin, Chaitanya spend twenty years of his life in the Hindu Kingdom of Orissa away from Muslim Bengal.[62]

Chaitaniya is also reported to have converted a Muslim theologian Bijli Khan to Vaishanavism[63] and according to another tradition a group of Pathans.[64] But Kartabhajas, a group among chaitaniya's followers were monotheists and synergetic and had contact with Muslim faqirs, they recruited Muslims and Christian into their fold and celebrated their *Sabbath* on Friday.[65]

A very charming figure in the Krishna cult of North India is that of the princess Mira Bai, who worshiped Krishna in the name of Girdhar-Gopal or Hari and though she denounced Hindu ritual, her devotion was intensely subjective and more and less untouched by the polemical atmosphere that was simultaneously borrowing from Islam and rejecting it.

Prannath (1618-94)

The ideas put forward by Dara Shikoh were further developed by the Hindu saint and Scholar Prannath. This men life was very eventful. Born in a poor feudal family in Kathiwar, he left his house in his early youth and went wandering with some ascetics Prannath was well versed in Arabic, Persian, Sanskrit, Hindi, and even seemed to know the Hebrew. One of his books, Qulzum-e-Sharif was written in several languages.[66]

Prannath was a sworn enemy of religious strife and said that 'those whom you call infidel possess all virtues, that whatever the Quran says, the Vedas also say.

Unity was one of the main ideas preached by Prannath. He preached not only Hindu- Muslim Unity, but the integrity of India, which was not usually mentioned in the literature of this important historical juncture:

> Every one loves best the tongue of his skin There are thousands of languages in the world people speak differently and have different customs, It is impossible to count all the languages, But all of them, taken together, I'll call Indian.[67]

Prannath founded a community that exists even today, mostly in Gujrat. It members, both Hindus and Muslims pray and eat together.[68]

Jain Monki

Among the Jains an important or mist was Banarsi Das of Jaunpur. He wrote the biographical poem *Ardhakanthanaka*. This poem is interesting as a description of the commercial and family life in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and also as a history of the author's spiritual search. Banarsidas assimilated many features of *Bhakti* to his own ideas. From his youth he had an

enquiring mind and was some times sceptical about Jain and Hindu rituals.[69] At the beginning of the eighteenth century a Jain monk Meghavijaya called him a man who proclaimed his independent views (svamata) and noted that his ideas were popular.[70]

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CHAPTER 3

SOCIAL CONDITIONS

In this chapter we will try to bring into focus the relevant rays radiating from the accounts of the contemporary chroniclers in which a way as to paint a vivid picture of society in Mughal India. So an attempt has been made to describe, under a few major heads, the various facets of the society and culture during the period under review.

Hindu Society

In the Mughal age (1526-1707), the Hindu formed the vast majority of the country's population. The upper class consisted of *Brahmins*, *Rajputs*, *Kayasths* and *Vaishyas* and they did not inter-marry among themselves. The castes rules and taboos had become more rigid. Al-Beruni describing the social condition of the medieval that time says that even the Vaish was not permitted to hear or recite vedic mantrtas and that if he uttered the sacred word his tongue was cult of by order of the Magistrate.[1] The Brahmans were in priestly and teaching professions, and many of them were doing agriculture. The Rajputs were military men and their tribal chiefs were rulers of extensive territories and held high ranks as mansabdars in the Mughal imperial service.[2] Vaishyas were in the mercantile profession and the Kayasthas were largely as clerks, munshis and revenue personnel. Many Hindus of the lower castes, for caste restrictiveness within Hinduism, economic incentives and political pressure, changed their religion and accepted Islam. The two most undesirable features of the Hindu society were untouchability and poverty. The touch of the *chandal* were considered defilement, and the person concerned had to purify by bathing

along with his clothes. Poverty led to surplus labour to become bounded-labour.

Feudal Society

Society in Mughal times was organized on feudal basis. The king was the apex of the system, and below him were his mansabdars cum nobles who held high offices in the state. There was little honour or dignity outside the imperial service and talented youth aspired to join it. This privileged position of extraordinary respectability created a great divergence in the stand and of those who lived at court and those who were away from it. The court was the centre of wealth and culture, whereas away in the country side find modest competence and wretched misery continued coexisted.[3]

When Akbar assumed power in 1556, the Muslims had been living in India for four centuries. Among Muslim the converts from Hinduism counted a considerable number. They were *Shaikhzada* and developed into a partially Indianized heterogeneous community, consisting of Arabs, Afghans, Turks, Persians etc. But the upper class Hindus, though few in number, also embraced Islam. "It is true", write Gankovsky, "that members of the higher Hindu castes and not only those of the lower castes also "embraced Islam (in the first place in order to retain their high social position)".[4]

Tradition and customs die hard. The Hindu converts to Islam continued their age old social institutions and traditions on accepting Islam. Thus quite a good number of Hindu customs crept into the hybrid Muslim society in India. The Muslims, on account of their more accommodating and less rigid social institutions put on obstruction on customs and habits of the new comers into

Islam. This led to cultural give and take. Islam is not a religion of rituals but a complete code of life for mankind.

Islam basically believes in the uniformity of ideas and actions among its followers. The ideal of life for a Muslim, whether he is in India or in Indonesia, is to follow Islamic institutions as far as possible. Thus the orthodox religious institutions, Arabic in origin, became synonymous with Islam. "If Islam moulded", writes a modern critic, "the character of recruits to its fold, the recruits have no less moulded the character of Islam in different countries ... Islam galvanized the conquered communities into nations no doubt; but these revitalized nations, particularly with an older civilization, rose in revolt not against Islam but against Arabicism".[5]

As stated earlier, Muslims had been living in India for centuries. Therefore, the socio-cultural environment which governed the largest section of Indian population was bound to affect the lives of the Indian Muslim. Hence it is correct to assert that Muslim culture in India was a synthesis of the two social orders – Islamic and Hindu. Persian culture played no less a part in the social life of the Muslims during the Mughul period. Persian had been the language, of the Delhi Sultanate[6] and many Persian customs were being practised by the Indian Muslims prior to the coming of the Mughul.[7]

The contemporary Mughul chronicles mostly deal with the lives of kings and princes and their military exploits. Not much had been written about the social and cultural life of the masses. However, it is possible to reconstruct the life style of the aristocracy from literary and poetical works and folklore.

Muslim Society

Muslim society was divided into three classes : first, the *Ahl-i-Daulat* comprising royal family and the military aristocracy; second, the *Ahl-i-Sa'adat* consisting of men distinguished for their learning, mainly religious, *Ulama* (theologians), *Qazis* (judicial officers), the Sayyids and men of letters and the third, the *Ahl-i-Murad,* that is, those who possessed beauty and elegance and catered to pleasures, i.e., musicians and singers.[8] Of these categories *Ahl-i-Sa'adat* or men of learning commanded greater respect than the people belonging to the other two categories. *Ahl-i-Sa'adat* and the landed aristocracy, merchants, physicians and skilled artisans constituted the middle class. The masses of the people, particularly the agriculturist class, had no say in the government and therefore wielded no power. They paid taxes, in return for security of life and property, to their immediate landlords in an essentially feudal and agriculturist society.

The type of hereditary aristocracy which we find in Europe during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries did not exist in Mughul India. The state enjoyed right to confiscate the property of the deceased and after deducting claims of government and making provision for the wife of the noble. The entire property deposited into *Baitul mal.* The son of a noble had to prove his worth to obtain a *mansab* (rank) in government service. The sovereign could promote or demote a noble at his will.[9] The aristocracy constituted a class by itself in Mughul India and set the standard for the common people.[10] The rich lived a life of splendour and extravagance. Even Zia-ud-Din Barani (circa 1285-1357), states that due to their lavishness and munificence the Muslim

nobility of Delhi remained in debt and used to borrow money from *Sahus* (Hindu bankers).[11] Bernier, the French historian, corroborate, the views of Barani with regard to the Mughul nobility in the seventeenth century.[12]

The nobles maintained a large staff of servants and spent huge amounts on entertainment. The dinner given by Asaf Khan to Sir Thomas Roe, testifies to the lavishness of the Mughul nobility.[13] Two other instances of their extravagence can be offered. 'Abdur Rahim Khan-i-Khanan gave eighty thousand rupees to the poet Shakeb-i Isfahani when the latter left for Mecca[14]; and when Ghazali composed a *mathnawi* consisting of 1000 verses in praise of Khan Zaman, the latter gave to the poet one gold *ashrafi* for every verse as a reward.[15]

The general masses lived in kaccha or thatch houses. A noble had a *diwan khana* where he entertained his male guests. There were gardens and tanks inside the house. Regarding the houses of the nobility Pelsaert states, They use unslaked lime, which is mixed with milk, gum and sugar into a thin paste. When the walls have been plastered with lime, they apply this paste, rubbing it with well-designed trowels until it is smooth; then they polish it steadily with agates, perhaps for a whole day, until it is dry and hard, and shines likes alabaster, or can even be used as a looking-glass".[16] They also sometime used mica 'plaster to cool the houses. The cots of the richer class were decorated with gold and silver. They had untensils, made of gold and silver[17]. The female apartments were built in the centre of the house. To minimize corruption Aurangzeb ordered his nobles of rank of 400 and higher to get prior permission if they wanted to construct a *pacca* house.[18]

Very little information is available regarding the life style of the middle class. Traders and merchants (who belonged to this class) lived a better life than those who lived in the interior of the country. They maintained servants for domestic help, and their houses were furnished with Persian carpets.[19]

The condition of the lower classes was deplorable. Pelsaert writes Their houses are built of mud with thatched roofs. Furniture there is little or none except some earthen ware pots to hold water and for cooking, and two beds, one for the man, the other for his wife ... Their bed-clothes are scanty, merely a sheet, or perhaps two ... this is sufficient in the hot weather, but the bitter cold nights are miserable indeed".[20] Manrique corroborates Pelsaert when he says that the poor people in Bengal lived in thatched houses of straw and leaf. The common man used furniture made of straw mats which were also used as bedding.[21]

Trade

Trade was the next occupation which attracted people of the middle classes most. Hindus, Armenians and Persians controlled the business on coasts of India and had trade links with Persia, Arabia and South East Asia. For instance, Virji Vora (1619-1670) a Gujarati *banya,* not only controlled the trade of Surat and the Southern Coast of India but also carried on business with the Persian Gulf and the Indian Archipelago. According to Thevenot, the French traveller, who came to India in the seventeenth century, Virji Vora was considered to be the richest man in the world. His *hundies* (letters of credit) were honoured in those regions. The Multani merchants gave place to the Hindu Marwaris.[22]

We find Muslims 'working as teachers, artists, painters, calligraphers, medical doctors, surgeons, etc., during the Mughul period. The people of Persian origin were preferred as clerks. Most of the Mir Bakhshis (Heads of *mansabdari* system and military affairs) under Aurangzeb were of the same origin.[23]

Education

There were no government-aided schools. We however hear some important school run by medieval scholars and teacher. The govt. provide land grants to few of them.

Hindus had their own *pathshalas* or schools. Many Hindus learnt Persian for entry into the lower middle ranks of the Revenue Department. It were such people who later came to be known as *Kayasth.* Some of them were men of letters-poets, letter-writers and composers of revenue manuals.

Maktab, or a primary school, was attached to the mosque, where reading of the *Quran* was taught and elementary education was imparted.[24] *Madrasahs,* or colleges, provided higher learning and were financed by nobles and patrons of education. Every useful science was taught but emphasis was laid on theology, medicine, calligraphy and logic. Other subjects included accounts, geometry, mathematics, astronomy, economics, agriculture, physics, philosophy and history.[25] Students who studied *Mizan-ul-Itidal fi naqdir rijal* of Muhammad ibn Ahmad az-Zahabi (d. 748/1348) and *al-Kasluhaff* written by Mahmud Ibn Umar (d. 528/1134), were given special stipends under *Aurangzeb.*[26] There existed no system of examinations. To have studied under a recognized teacher was considered a sufficient qualification "or a student[27]

who after completing his education in the study of the *Quran, Hadith* and sufism was awarded an *ijaza* (certificate) by his mentor.

Madrasah-i-Mulla Abdul Hakim at Sialkot attracted scholars from all over the country in the reign of Shah Jahan (1628-1657). Badaun, Azimabad (Patna), Murshidabad, Hyderabad, Lahore, Delhi, Agra, Ahmadabad, Burhanpur, Jaunpur, Sirhind and Thaneser were other big centres of learning during this period. Shah Jahan founded an imperial college, known as *Darul Baqa,* at Delhi in 1060/1650. Maulana Muhammad Sad-rud-Din was appointed its Director. Hamilton, who visited India during the reign of Aurangzeb 'Alamgir', says that Thatta alone had four hundred colleges, where subjects like theology, philosophy and politics were taught. Qazi Rafi-ud-Din founded a *madrasah* at Biyanah in 1670 at his own expense, Akram-ud-Din built a *madrasah,* named Hidayat Bakhsh, in 1697 at Ahmadabad at a cost of Rs. 1,24,000/- from his own pocket.[28]

Customs

There was no uniformity in customs and ceremonies, which differed from place to place and from tribe to tribe. The birth of a son was celebrated with *aplomb* in a family. *Azan* (call to prayer) was recited in the ears of the new-born baby by a holy man or an elderly male member of the house so that the baby should hear first the name of merciful Allah and the pious Prophet Muhammad Saheb *(PUBH)*, *'Aqiqah* was performed according to the Islamic injunction: two goats or lambs for a son and one for a daughter were sacrificed. The *Bismillah* ceremony was observed when the child attained the age of four years, four months and four days. Circumcision was performed at the earliest convenient date.

The committing of the *Quran* to memory by a male or female was regarded as a great act of piety and a good omen for the family of *Hafiz*[29] particularly the parents. After becoming emperor of India in 1658, Aurangzeb Alamgir committed the *Quran* to memory in a short period of one year, i.e, in 1071/1661-62.[30] The copying of the *Quran* in beautiful and attractive style was very common, These manuscripts fetched heavy prices for the copyist. This gave rise to the art of calligraphy and we find the Quran copied in various scripts-*kufic*, *Naskh, Nastaliq, Sulus, Tauqi, Bihari, Raihan, Riqa* etc.[31] Verses from the *Quran* and *Hadith* were often quoted by the learned in conversation and in their writings. In chapter six about the art of calligraphy and its type is discussed in detail.

A considerable segment of the Muslim community of India had a great weakness for superstitions. They invoked help from *pirs* (saints), dead or alive, who were considered endowed with miraculous power. A similar practice was found amongst the Hindus who regarded their *Guru* as their spiritual leader. The Hindus also welcomed the people through *Namastay, namaskar* and some time 'Adab' (like Muslim too). The Muslims would go to the tomb of the saint and beseech for the grant of their desire and offered large amounts in charity. The *gaddi-nashins* (successors of the saints) were the 'Brahmins of Islam'[32] who exploited the name of their preceptor and fleeced enormous amounts of money from their followers.

Hindu Polygamy

Polygamy was a practice prevalent both among the Hindus and the Moslems, especially belonging to the richer section of the society. Abul Fazl,

referring to the Hindus, writes, 'Excepting in the king, it is not considered right for a man to have more than one wife, unless the first wife is sickly or proves barren, or her children die. In these cases he may marry ten wives, but if the tenth proves defective, he may not marry again. If the first wife is unsuitable, and he desires to take another, he must give the first a third part of his estate.[33]

Akbar, though polygamous himself, appears to have been opposed to polygamy for the general populace. Abul Fazl writes "Nor does his majesty approve of every one marrying more than one wife; for this ruins a man's health and disturbs the peace of house'.[34] Badaoni also refers to the introduction of a custom by the emperor for checking polygamy thus :... that people should not have more than one legal wife, unless he had no child. In any other case the rule should be one man and one woman.[35] Inspite of this it appears that polygamy continued to exist among the aristocratic and well-to-do classes, who are told maintained *harams*.

Polygamy is permitted in Islam to the extent of four wives on the condition of strict equality of treatment among them. The Quran warns Muslims that "If you fear ye shall not be able to deal justly (with them), then (marry) only one".[36] Unfortunately some Muslims misinterpreted this permission and married more than one wife at a time without giving much attention to the spirit of the permission. But generally Muslims paractised monogamy, partly due to the religious injunction and partly due to economic reasons. Wealthy Muslim (in addition to slave girls) kept more than one wife at a time.

The age for marriage was not fixed. In order to avoid child marriage, Akbar ordered that no boy under the age of sixteen and a girl under the age of

fourteen should be married.[37] Badaoni also refers to the fact that Akbar disliked the idea of old woman (whose menses had ceased) wishing for a husband[38] or of a husband marrying a wife older than him by twelve years.[39] If, however, Badaoni is believed, Akbar may be regarded as a great anticipatory, some four centuries back, of the modern social reformers in these directions, and for indeed, he was discredited by the orthodox Muslims of his times. The mediators of marriages known as "Ghataks" in Bengal also seem to have played significant parts in the settlement of marriages, and they charged fees for their services rendered.[40] Bernier observes thus: 'No one marries but in his own trade or profession, and this custom is observed almost as rigidly by the Mohammadans as by the Gentiles to whom it is expressly enjoyed by law. Many are beautiful girls, thus doomed to live singly, girls who might marry advantageously if their parents could connects them with a family less noble than their own.[41] Mannuci also refers to these caste marriage.[42] Faint trace of future *Kulinism*[43] particularly in Bengal may, however, be ascribed to this practice.

In this chapter it is difficult to give a detailed and comprehensive account of the marriage ceremonies, which were varied from community to community. These differed from as per religious views, conformity local customs, traditions and economic status of the individuals. Some elaborate accounts are however available of the marriage ceremonies of royal families and upper strata of the society in the contemporary Persian chronicle.[44] Huge amounts were spent on such occasions. Three million rupees were spent on the marriage of Dara Shikoh with the daughter of prince Parwez in 1633.[45] The customs on such occasions were mixture of different cultures-Islamic, Persian,

Turkish and Hindu. The *lolian,* who were of Persian origin, sang wedding[46] songs in their native language, whereas *domnis* group sang in Hindustani.

Though Islam has given full freedom to a girl or a boy in the choice of a spouse, yet the custom of arranged marriages was the order of the day and still persists in many quarters. Sweets, dry fruits and *pans* (betel leaves) were distributed among peoples invited at engagement. The amount of *Mahr* (the contractual amount to be paid by the bridegroom to his wife) was fixed according to the status of the bridegroom's family. As there is no priesthood in Islam, any person could perform the ceremony of marriage. In Islam the daughter inherits half the share of her brother from her father's property, but this law, mainly to prevent the division of the landed property, was not effectively practised.

Dowry and Divorce

Both Badoni and Nizamuddin Ahmed have referred to dowry and to the prevalence of this practice among the high class Moslems.[47] But, among the Hindus it was not allowed, except in the cases of low castes and the sudras.[48] Abul Fazl mentions that the system of dowry seems to have been absent among the Brahmans of those days.[49] He further informs us that Emperor Akbar disapproved of high dowries, although he (the emperor) believed that the fixing up high dowries was preventive against such rash divorces.[50]

In pursuance of Islamic tradition a Muslim would greet with *Assalaam-o-Alaikum* (Peace be upon you) a fellow Muslim, who would reply with *waalaikum-us-salaam.* Aurangzeb banned (sajda, zamin bos, etc.) the un-Islamic practice of greeting a person by raising hand and bowing forward a

little. though *Kornish* was allowed, and ordered that greetings should be strictly verbal.[51]

Dress

Dress differed amongst various social classes and religious groups. The nobility wore expensive garments with gold thread work on them. *Qaba,* which was made of muslin or fine cotton, was worn by men as an upper garment. *Qaba* was also worn by the Hindus who tied its strings on their left while Muslims tied them on their right side. *Dagla* or *farghul* were used by aristocracy as top coats in winter.[52] The other winter garments worn over trousers included *gazar, sozni* and *do-tahi. Neem-tanahs* with full or half sleeves were worn by men extending from shoulders to the lower part of the waist. The use of *qamis* (shirt) was very common. *Shah-ajidah* was a kind of royal stitch coat.[53] *Achkin* was commonly used by men, *Patka* was lied around the waist.[54] The Muslim *ecclesiasts* – Ulama *and* Mashaikh – dressed themselves in such a way that they were distinguished from the general public. They wore *Kulah-i-darwesh* or the *Qalansuwah* on their head. A *sufi* would wear a long woolen gown. An orthodox male Muslim did not wear silk, velvet or brocade. use of which is not lawful for him. He would wear clothes of ordinary material. The Shias wore a twelve-pointed or seven-pointed scarlet cap. according to their sect.

The dress of women, like that of men, differed according to their social status and family traditions. *Taaqi, qassabah, lachiq, dopatta* and *muqllah* were the various types of head dress used by women. *Jubha, qaba, qamis* and *charqab* were the upper garments. *Posteen, tarhat,* made of camel wool, and

shawls of various kinds, some embroidered with gold and silver, were used in winter. Women also wore *neemtanah* (jacket) studied with saphire, emeralds and other precious stones. Muslim women generally wore close fitting *pyjamas.*[55] *Lehnga* was more common amongst Hindu women. *Gharara* was used by both Hindu and Muslim women as trousers. Women of all classes ordinarly wore *qamis, shalwar* and *dopatta.* In Kashmir the poor classes wore as full dress a long *kurta* or *jamah* made of pattu whereas in the Punjab this long *kurta* was made of cotton.



Fig. 4. A Mughal boy's court, early 18th century

Ornaments

The use of ornaments has always been an important feature of female life. Abul Fazl gives a long list of thirty-seven types of ornaments used by women in Mughal India.[56] *Sisphool, sarasari* and *chchapka* were put on head; *halqa-i-dar, karan, darbacha, papal, baali, machli* and *chondani* were different varieties of ear rings; *gulu-band, haar, haans* or *hasli* and *nasim* were

among the various kinds of neckware. *Kangan, gajra* and *choribin* were the type of armlets; and *payal* was worn around the ankles and *anwat* was an ornament for the toe. It may be noted that excessive use of gold and precious stones, like diamond, sapphire, emerald, rubies, opal, etc. was made in the manufacture of jewelery.[57]

Pardah

Muslim women observed *pardah.* They have been ordained by God to :

"Cast their outer garments over their persons (when abroad): that is most convenient, that they should be known (as such) and not molested".[58]

At another place the *Quran* says that Muslim women:

"should lower their gaze and guard their modesty; that they should not display their beauty and ornaments except what (must ordinarily) appear thereof; that they should draw their veils over their bosoms and not display to their beauty... in order to draw attention to their hidden ornaments".[59]

The term *pardah,* as commonly applied in India, means a curtain and when it applies to women it means a veil. *Burqa* amongst Indian Muslim women is a later development.[60] *Chadar*[61] was in common use.

The underlying motive behind the *pardah* was to keep the women away from *naa-mahram* i.e., those with whom they could marry. They continued observing the practice even to their old age. A Muslim girl starts observing *pardah* when she attain the age of puberty. It was observed by all classes of the Muslim community except the peasant women and other working classes. The women of artistocracy moved in *palkis* or *dolis*, which were heavily

covered and carried by men.[62] The women of higher Hindu classes followed suit and started observing the same custom.[63] Even the poor or lower class Muslim women would not come out in public without being properly clad.

Festivals

Islam, being a puritanical religion, has only two canonical festivals, but the Indian Muslims have added a few more to celebrate. *Id-ul-Fitr* and *Id-ul-Azha,* the two main canonical festivals in Islam, were celebrated in Mughul India with great zeal and fervour. On these occasions the Mughul rulers and their provincial governors offered their prayers along with the nobility and other Muslims at the *Jami masjid* of the city or in an open field. *Jami masjids* of Delhi. Agra, Lahore, Multan, Thatta, Burhanpur, etc were amongst the important places where mammoth gatherings offered prayers on these festivals. *Shab-i-Barat* - "the night of record" was observed on the 15th night of *Sha'ban.* The orthodox spent the night in offering prayers and seeking forgiveness of God, while the unorthodox celebrated the night by the show of fireworks.[64] *Id-i-Milad-un-Nabi,* i.e. the birth anniversary of pious Prophet Muhammad Saheb (PBUH), was observed on the 12th *Rabi-ul-Awwal* (3rd Islamic month) when public buildings, homes and mosques were illuminated. A few festivals of purely social nature were also observed. For example, the Iranian spring festival of *Nauruz* was started by Akbar and celebrated by the royalty and his nobility-both Muslim and Hindu. The *Jashn-i-Nauruz* (new year festivities) lasted for three weeks. It was a national festival Historian Badaoni calls it 'Nauroz-i-Jalali. Its celebration continued till the early period of Aurangzeb 'Alamgir, who instead, introduced *Jashn-i-Nashat, Afruz,* which started in *Ramthan.*[65]

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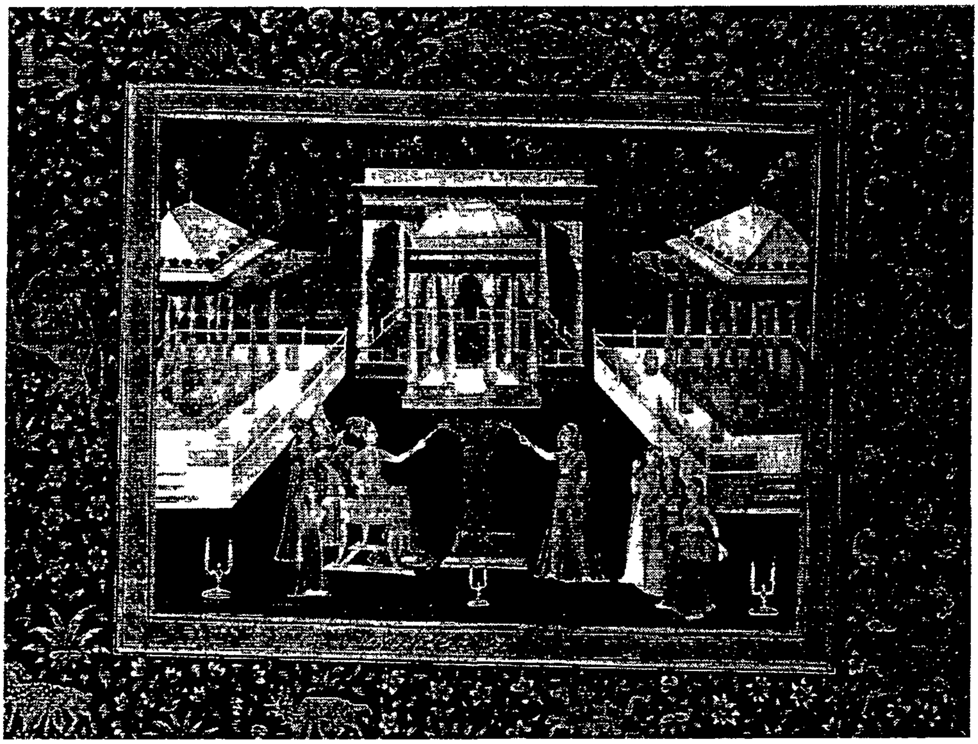


Fig. 5. Princess Zeb un-nisa, daughter of Aurangzeb, at the shab-i barat festival. Faizabad, early 18th century.

Association with a Hindus was bound to affect the social life of the Muslims Muslims joined their Hindu friends in celebrating Hindu festivals of *Diwali Holi, Basant* etc.[66] The cultural contact between the two major communities in India-Hindus and Muslims gave birth to a common *lingua franca',* zuban-i-Hindvi (Urdu) widely spoken in India, Bangladesh and Pakistan.

Evils

Imperial Haram

The women's apartment of an eastern king in the common parlance of western historians, is known as *seraglio* or *haram*. The word *haram* is of Arabic origin. a verbal noun. meaning sacred. In our period of review the haram in the palace of the emperor is called *Mahal* both by the chronicles of the time and the European travelers. Abul Fazl has given it a more appropriate

name – Shabistan-i-Iqbal or shabistan-i-Khas. The Imperial Haram, with a large enclosure, consisted of numerous beautiful buildings where the Emperor, the ladies of the royal family as well as those of selected nobles of high ranks resided. Abul Fazl refers to it thus : "His majesty has made a large enclosure with five building inside where he reposes. Though there are more than five thousand women, has given to each a separate apartment. He has also divided them into sections, and keeps them attentive to their duties.[67] Manucci refers to Aurangzeb's haram thus : 'Ordinarily there are within the Mahal two thousand women of different races. Each has her office or special duties, either in attendance on the king, his wives, his daughters, or his concubines. To rule and maintain order among their last class, each one is assigned her own set of rooms. and matrons are placed over than. It is to be noted, in this connection, that most of the Hindu Rajas and the nobles also maintained their harams like their Muslim counterparts, but they normally kept their concubines in separate establishments and not in this homes.[68]

Sati

The act of burning of Hindu wife under certain conditions after the death of the husband was called Sati. The custom was especially favoured by the Rajputs. The Emperor Humayun was the first monarch to think of extending an absolute prohibition to all cases. Manucci says that Mughal emperors had imposed prohibition it in order that a woman should not be forced society.[69] Akbar issued an order that a woman should not be freed to Sati.[70] Jahangir also prohibited Sati. Aurangzeb also disallowed a women to be burnt.[71] We learn from Manucci that the emperor (Aurangzeb), on his return

from Kashmir (December 1663 A.D.). "issued an order that in all lands Mughals control never again should the official sallow a woman to be burnt. This order endures to this day.[72] This humanitarian rule is also mentioned in the official manuals of his reign.[73]

Jauhar

This custom was, more or less, confined to the gallant Rajputs.[74] Abul Fazl refers to this fatal custom performed by the Rajput of Chittor, on its fall, thus. "for it is an Indian custom that when such a calamity has occurred a piti is made of sandlwood, alone etc., as large as possible and to add this, dry firewood and oil. Then they leave hard hearted confidents in charge of their women. As soon as it is certain that there has been a defeat and that the men have been killed, these subborn ones reduce the innocent women to ashes.[75] Jauhar, in fact, refers to the high standard of womanly honour maintained among the brave Rajputs.

Prostitution

Alauddin was the first medieval Indian ruelr to take steps against public prostitution, which was looked upon as a necessary evil during that (Sultanat) age. These public women (prostitutes) and dancing damsels were engaged on special occasion of mirth and gaiety e.g., feast, festivals, marriages and the like.[76] they also provided suitable recreation to the inmates of the harams, maintained by the Emperors and the nobles, by means of their captivating dances and hilting songs. Badaoni observes, "These (the prostitutes) be made to live outside the city and called the place *Shaitanpurah*. He writes further". Every one who wanted to visit a public women had to get his particulars noted

down in the *daroga* (police) office and also pay the state fee".[77] Special permission of the Emperor was necessary if any courtier wanted to have a virgin. Akbar himself inquired into the cases of some of the principal prostitutes, and punished those grandes who were responsible for depriving them of their virginity.[78] Inspite of all these, it appears that Akbar could not eradicate this evil[79] yet, in dealing with it, he was certainly far ahead of his age. During the years following the death of this great Emperor till the early year of Aurangzeb's puritanic reign, the evil of prostitution seems to have aggravated and the courtesans as well as the singing dancing public women might have been reaping very good harvests.[80]

Manucci speaks about *Kanchani* type of public women Shahjahan's reign who were under the obligation to attend twice a week at court for which they received pay, and to perform at a special place which the king had assigned to them. This class is more esteemed than others by reasons of their great beauty... All of them appear and dance in the royal presence.[81] He, again, refers to dancing women, in general, and says that they exhibited their performances in the principal open places in the city, from six in the evening till nine at night, lighted by many torches, and they earned a good deal of money.[82]

Aurangzeb could not ban prostitution altogether, and Ovington who was in Surat as late as 1689 A.D. found many prostitutes and dancing girls there. The famous Bengali poet Bharat Chadra writing in the middle of the 18[th] century A.D.. also refers to the prostitutes and dancing girls as 'Kashi'.

Slavery

Slavery has been an important phenomenon in Indian history. Both in ancient and medieval India slavery was recognized institution.[83]

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, apart from the areas where agrestic slavery existed slaves were mainly used as domestic servants. According to Irfan Habib, Agrestic slavery was apparently confined to regions like Assam, Mithila (the northern part of the Bihar) and Malesar (Kerala). Condition appear to have been different in the 13th and 14th centuries, when slave were employed as artisans and general labourers fairly extensively.[84] The christis texts provide important evidence that such was the case.

Mirza Haider Dughlat. Babur's cousin and author of *Tarikh-i-Rashdi* reports of a large number of slaves-soldiers employed as camp followers and work hard in the army.[85] We find slaves being sent for fodder during march.[86] Some slaves of Babur and Humayun also rose to the position of officers and could be gathered form the list of nobles in *Ain-i-Akbari*. The *Ain* includes five of Humayun's slave (one. a commander of 2000, two commander of 900, one of three hundred and fifty, and one of 200) and an eunuch who had earlier served under Babur.[87] The Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri mentions the two slaves of Humayun who were promoted by Akbar, namely Mihtar Khan and Peshrau Khan.[88]

Akbar continued to possess a large retinue of Slaves[89], some of these inherited from Babur and Humayun. By and order of 1582, it is reported that he liberated thousands of his slaves who were given the option to continue in service at the court for which they now received a pay (1 Rupee to 1 dam per

diem), and they were given the designation '*chelas*'.[90] Jahangir acclaims the work of a *chela* (named Murad) in completing the buildings of a place (Chaukhati, Kahsmir), for which he increased his mansab.[91]

The institution of chelas continued even after Akbar – in the seventeenth and also eighteenth century. A close scrutiny of the Massir-ul-Umara, had brought forth a number of individuals having the title *chelas* during this period serving as troopers/attendants and also as officers.[92] According to Mannuci, *Chelas* were the 'branded' name of the royal establishment who were under the slave officers.[93] Interestingly under Aurangzeb, we find reference that slaves were eagerly sought for the royal retinue.[94]

Enjoyments

The Muslims have been ordered in the *Quran* to refrain from the use of all kinds of intoxicating drinks and gambling, etc. The *Quran* says:

> Ye who believe!
> Intoxicants and gambling,
> (Dedication of) stones,
> And (divination by) arrows,
> Are an abomination,
> of Satan's handiwork:
> Eschew much (abomination),
> That ye may prosper.[95]

But unfortunately every Mughal king except Aurangzeb freely indulged in drinking.[96] The princes, nobility and even people belonging to religious classes – *Muftis, Mir Adls* – with some exceptions, took wine in public as well a sin private.[97] Jahangir used to take daily twenty cups of *araq-i-do-atisha* (doubly distilled spirit) weighing six Indian *sers* or one and a half Irani *man*.[98]

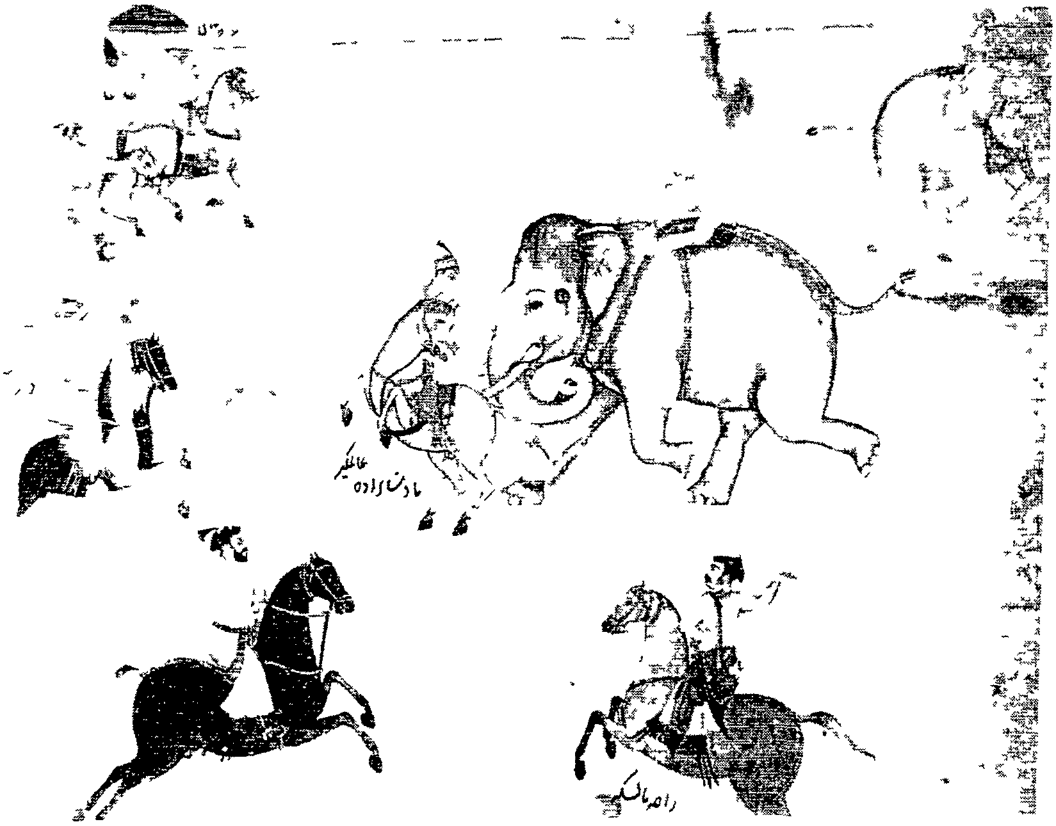


Fig 6 Prince Aurangzeb spearing an excited elephant in the presence of his father and brothers, mid-17th century.

Wine was easily obtainable at government rates from the public bars during the reign of Akbar. Abul Fazl would call it "sense-increasing".[99] A few drops of wine were poured on the ground as "the share of the earth".[100] Punishments were enforced some times against drinking, the use of which continued throughout the Mughul period and had become a common evil. The richer classes had become so addicted to drinking that wine was served daily at their meals.[101] Dancing parties were arranged to celebrate happy occasions Gambling was also practised. Besides liquor, opium, *bhang* and *chars* were also taken by a good number of people.[102]

Chess, played by two or four persons *(shatranj-i-kamil)* at a time, and *chaupar,* also called *chauser* or *pachisi* (dice or draughts), were popular

indoor games for members of every class of society. *Ganjafa* or the game of cards, was probably introduced in India by Babur. The outdoor games included *chaugan* (horse-polo), hunting with falcons, horse racing, cock fighting, pigeon flying , wrestling, arrow shooting, etc.[103]



Fig. 7. Late 18th century Mughal playing cards

Social Intercourse (Give and Take Policy)

The mixture of both Hindu and Muslim way of life resulted in producing a new social system i.e. beliefs, customs and practices were evolved and followed by the inhabitants of a region. It was very difficult to distinguish between Hindus and Muslims except in mosque or temples.

The Muslim rulers in Sind influenced by the locals adopted their practices. They started wearing dress similar to that of a native Kings. They also started wearing *pagdi* (headgear) keeping long hair and let their beard grow. Islamic law prohibits the use of gold and silver ornaments for Muslim men. But due to their close contacts with Hindus all the Muslim rulers and elites adorned themselves with all kinds of jewellery and precious stones in their daily life and on important festive occasions.[104] The Hindu kings too

influenced by the Muslims, adopted Achkans and tight fitting trousers (churidar pyjamas). Brocades printed silk and muslin were the common dress of the upper classes of both the Hindus and the Muslims. The manner of clothing, with the passage of the time became so similar that it was difficult to distinguish Hindu noble from his Muslim counterpart. The Album of emperor Jahangir preserved in the Berlin Museum shows that even the rulers of distant Kutch and Nawanagar had began to put on the Mughal dress and the portraits of Rajput nobles from the time of Man Singh shows that apart from the caste mark which distinguished the Hindu, the dress both Hindu and Muslim nobles was practically identical.[105] So similar were their appearances that it was not easy to make out the identity of the person. As a matter of fact, Husain Khan, Governor of Punjab greeted a Hindu with the Islamic mode of salutation in his court and on discovering his mistake, issued an instruction asking the Hindus to wear a particular *badge* on the *sleeves* of their garments.[106] The common people comprising both the Hindus and Muslims looked so similar that it was not possible to detect their identity. Jahangir writes in his Memoir that in Kashmir, he could not distinguish between a Hindu and Muslim. Aurangzeb, it is said had tried to bring reforms in the Muslim society in the manner of dress after his accession to throne. He posted barbers and tailors at the gate of the royal castle to cut of the extra length of beard and pyjamah but failed in this venture.[107]

The Muslim rulers borrowed Court ceremonies from the Hindus. The royal custom of *nyochawar*, passing over of the gold and silver coins thrice over the head of the ruler and offering them to the menials and the poor persons, was a Hindu Court etiquette followed by the Muslim rulers. Another ceremony was the Tula Dan, weighing the ruler in precious metal or goods and

then distributing among the poor was also adopted by the Muslim from the Hindu rulers.[108] The Hindu rulers also copied many practices of the Muslim Courts. Persian words like Peshwa, daftardar, Jagtan-Mulk, Hukumatpanah, Mukhtyara, Kayda were used. The Muslim Names like Shahji, Piraji, Sultanji, Sabhanji, Haibatrao, Sahebrao etc were common in Hindus also.[109] Muslims, on the other hand adopted Hindu Names. Even the high born Muslims of Turkish descent kept Hindu names as Chajju, Kachchan, Hamidraja etc. In Bengal, the names of innumerable families bear the stamp of Muslim influence. The names suggesting the position which their forbears used to occupy in the states of Muslim Kings, for instance, Tarfdar, Mahal, Navis, Chitnavis, Majumdar, Khastagir, Viswas, Nakhal, Motamad etc.[110] In Muslim Courts, the official language was Persian and there used to be particular seat arrangement for different categories of orders. The non-Muslim rulers imitated the Mughal Court and it was difficult to find out the dissimilarities. Even in Maharaja Ranjit Singh's Court, the title of the Order of Merit or Star of Punjab or of gold medal was Persian. In fact the whole of the Court was a Punjabi version of the Persian Court. The Courtiers looked like feudal lords of Persia or Persian officers of the Mughal emperors. The coin which the Maharaja struck was in Persian legend;

> "Deg O, Tego, fateh Nusrat Bedarang
> Yaft Az Nanak Guru Gobind Singh"[111]

(Through hospitality and the sword to unending victory granted by Nanak and Guru Gobind Singh.)

In Rajasthan Persian words were used in the Rajasthani language. The royal seal of Swai Jai Singh bore on the reverse Nagari characters and on the

obverse Persian characters. Technical terms used in all the states of Rajasthan were Persian though the script used was Devanagri.[112]

Polygamy was common both among the Hindu and Muslim nobles and kings. The number of wives that a Hindu or Muslim chieftain possessed usually depended on his economic status. Their amusement, games and exercises were common. The virtues which they esteemed and the vices which they condemned were the same. Their manners of dealing with the superiors, equals and inferiors were similar. People respected not only their teachers but also their sons. Teacher was addressed as Ustad and his son was addressed, even by older students as Ustadzada. In their domestic life and household arrangements, arms and armours, it was difficult to distinguish the one from the other.[113]

Hindus and Muslims both had superstitious veneration for odd numbers. "It is remarkable," observes Howell, "that a Gentoo never gives or receives an obligation for an even sum, if he borrows or lends a hundred, a thousand, or ten thousand rupees, the obligation runs for a hundred and one, a thousand and one, ten thousand and one etc. The Mohammedans, in conformity only, have adopted this custom".[114] The nobles gave money in the form of nazar to the emperors on festive occasions in odd figures. This custom is still prevalent among both the communities.

Early marriages were current among both the communities. Dowry, a Hindu practice too became widespread among the Muslims. The simplicity of Muslim marriage was given up in favour of growing pomp and expensive display including music dancing and drinking. Girl's engagement (mangani) and her decoration for marriage, corresponding to Hindu bride's *solah singar* as well as some other ceremonies like *ubbatan* and *mehndi*, singing of wedding

songs all were observed by both the communities. Keeping of iron weapons by the bridegroom, the bridegroom's mounting the horseback while going to the house of the bride and gifts showered on the laps of the bride etc, were borrowed by the Muslims from the Hindus.[115] Widow remarriage sanctioned by Islam was frowned upon by the Indian Muslims under Hindu influence.[116] Both Hindu and Muslims regarded the birth of a girl child as burden and many Muslims like Hindus killed their daughters "to save the expenses and trouble of rearing them".[117] Both cherished an ardent desire for a male child. Like the Hindus, delivery was usually effected on the ground, the mother being made to lie on the quilt. *Chhatti* or the celebration of the sixth day after the birth of the child was common among both the communities. Caste system too crept in among the Muslims. Besides social distinction, there also grew occupational caste distinctions as among Hindus.[118]

Muslims also influenced Hindus dietary habits and preparations. Prejudice against onion which was called Malechand by Hindus as it was brought in India by Mahmud, was given up. *Biryani, Pulao, Korma, kofta* became popular and so were *Balooshahi, Gulab Jamun, Barfi, Halwa, Qala Qand, Khurma, Babar-bari, Murabba, Khursasani-khichri* and the use of earthen oven (tandoor) and so on. Chewing the betel leaf, a Hindu habit was prevalent among Muslims both the nobles and the common people. 'In the houses of Hindu nobility the great feast were in imitation to the manner of the Persian and the Central Asian Amirs'.[119]

Islam has prohibited the use of wine but in India its use in Muslim community was prevalent from kings to common masses. Even the women used to drink it. Aurangzeb made a frantic effort to banish its use but had to

acknowledge defeat in the long run. Once in despair, he cried, "In all Hindustan no more than two men could be found who did not drink, namely himself and Abdul Wahhab, the Chief Qazi, appointed by him." But Manucci humorously adds that "with respect to Abdul Wahhab, he was in error, for I myself sent him every day a bottle of spirits (wine) which he drank in secret, so that the king could not find it out".[120]

Except the small orthodox section, both the Hindus and Muslims participated in each other's festivals without inhibitions. Both the communities celebrated their fairs, feasts and festivals in the same ways. Holi, Diwali, Dussehra, Shivratri, Eid and Bakr-i-Eid were national festivals. These were not only celebrated with pomp and show in the Courts but also by the common people with great enthusiasm. These were the occasion for enjoyment and paying reverence to God. On the occasion of Diwali, the Muslims particularly of rural areas, illuminated their houses and huts, and took part in gambling, an important feature of the festival. The Muslims women considered Diwali as their Eid. On the day of Diwali, they sent pitchers full of red coloured rice as presents to the houses of their sisters and daughters. They observed all the customs associated with it. The Meos and Minas, living in the state of Alwar and Bharatpur celebrated not only Diwali and Dussehra but also Janamasthmi, the birthday of Lord Krishna. The Nawabs of Bengal and Awadh celebrated this festival in the royal fashion.[121]

In India, the Muharram festival drew some of its features like burying of the Taziyas and mimic attacks on effigies from the Ram Lila of the Hindus .In celebrating Muharram, hindus number exceeded than that of Muslims. It was not only in the procession that the Hindus joined. "They actually observed

Muharram as Muslims did in their homes as day of mourning and prayers when no festivity could be indulged in and no auspicious act such as marriage could be solemnized many Hindus had their own Taziyas and spears and Hindus boys fully became *Paiks Bahistis* donning green dress and badge and carrying the water Mashak. Hindu Akharas vied with the Muslim Akharas in displaying their feat with sword and *scimitar*, *Jutaku* and *lathi*. Very often there were joint Akharas".[122] Daulat Ram Sindhia and his officers participated in Muharram procession in green dress like Muslims.

Taziya processions were influenced by Durga Puja immersion or Rath Yatra processions. Even as late as 19th century Buchanan found that of the 1400 Taziya procession of Patna and Bihar Sharif area, 600 were conducted by the Hindus.[123] The preparation of Taziyas was carried with great religious fervour. The rich Hindus used to subscribed towards its expenses as the Muslims did to Durga image.[124] Basant Panchmi was celebrated with both the Hindus and Muslims with great enthusiasm. The celebrations which continued for seven days. The citizens of Delhi, including amirs and rich persons, dressed in costly robes used to visit the bank of Jamuna where the festivities of the festival were held.[125] The fair of Garh Mukhteshwar was an important fair in which thousands of people from different regions assembled for a dip in the holy Ganges Muslims in the company of their Hindu friends also visited the fair and used to have dip with devotion.[126]

Hindus took auguries from the Quran and the Muslim consulted Brahmins for the auspicious dates and days. The *Churihars* of U.P worshipped Kalka Sahja Mai (a Hindu Goddess); the Mirasis of Amritsar used to make offerings to Durga Bhawani, the Dudekulas Muslims of Madras worshipped

tools as done by Hindus at Dussehra festival.[127] Like the Hindus, the Muslims had invented several imaginary female personalities, endowed with supernatural powers, called Bibis, in whose name they cooked and observed fasts. Common to both was the Goddess Sitla or Small Pox. When a Child was attacked with the dread disease, small pox medicine as rule was not given for the fear of offending the Goddess Sitla. Cholera was worshipped as ala Devi by the Hindus and as ala Bibi by the Muslims. The Serpent Goddess was invoked equally by both, as Manasa.[128] Similarly moon was believed to possess a decisive influence on human affairs. Common to both was a dread of the effect of the eclipse of the moon or sun on a pregnant woman. They used to lie quietly for the duration of the eclipse lest their child be born deformed.[129]

Belief in omens, witchcraft, sorcery was also common among both the communities. Evil spirit was avoided by the use of charm (tawiz) bound on the arm or the neck and the use of magic or Jharphoonk. The evil eye of the deformed or the mutilated person was especially feared. Lemon was considered a protection against the evil eye. A curious case of syncretistic demonology was Hawwa. Another malignant Hindu figure Mano (the cat) was called Nikki Bibi among Muslims. Hindu dread of the departed wandering soul Pret was accepted in popular Indian Islam. So was the Bhut, the malignant soul of the victim of a violent death and churel.[130]

A man's name is a part of personality and a recital of those of the deities has special influence in Hindu religion. Hence the name and the age are to be concealed, the reason being that the knowledge of the age coupled with that of the sign of Zodiac under which a person was born will give his enemies a chance of working black magic against him. Because of this belief "all the

Mughal Emperors and other Muslim kings had at least three names; and accordingly the date of Akbar's birth was concealed and he was given a new name at his circumcision".[131]

The masses both the Hindus and the Muslims believed that the Pir possessed a supernatural power, e.g., curing diseases, assuaging the sorrow and pains of the poor, being present at the same time at different places or even reviving a dead man or causing rain to fall at a place. Both the Hindus and Muslims sang together to please the rain gods :

"Aulia! Maulia! Minh barsa
Sadi Kothi Dana pa'
Chiriye de munh pani pa".[132]

(Aulia Maulia send rain, put grain in our house and water in the beaks of the bird)

Sectional or communal feelings had no place in such cordial environments. All the people of a village stood together in their thick and thin, shared their happiness and sorrows as one large family. Together they composed and sang songs praising the bravery and celebrated the victory of their village-lad. One such composition sung by both the Hindus and Muslims of village Bhatti was:

"Bulla Bhatti wala"

Dulla was a Rajput of Bhatti who fought bravely with the imperial troops and defeated them during Akbar's reign.[133]

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we find that in Kalketu's marriage with Phullara the Ghatak charged five seers of *Gur*. five *Gandas* of *Pan* (betel) with supari and only four annas). Again we find eferences to ghatak in chaitanyas first amrriage 9Vide '*Chaitanaya Charitamarita* – Adillia, Cal. 1885, p. 343: 'Chaitanya Mangol; published by Aronodaya roy, Cal. 1900, p. 62).

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45. Lahori. Vol. I. pp. 452-60; Sayyid Sabah-ud-din 'Abdur Rehman Hindustan Key *Musalman Hukmaranon key ehad key tamaddani jalwey*, (Urdu) Azamgarh, Ma'arif Press, 1963, p. 504.

46. Pelsaert. p. 83.

47. Badani refers to the rich dowry taken in the marriage of prince Salim with the daughter of Raja Bhagwan Das. A sum of two crores of takas was fixed as the marriage settlement. Raja Bhagwan Das gone his daughter dowry several strings of horses, one hundred elephants, boys and girls of Ayasini a, India and Circasia, and all sorts of golden vessels set with jewels, and utensils of gold, and vesels of silver and all sorts of stuffs, the quantity of which is beyond all computation (Badaoni, II (Lowe), p. 352). Also *Tabqat-i-Akbari*, vol. II (tr. De), p. 599. Badoni, again makes a reference to dowry in the marriage of the Alikhan, the

ruler of Kashmir, (V. III (tr.), p. 99, which was demanded back by the father when she had to be divorced).

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49. *Ain* III (J & S), p. 339.

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61. *Chadder* is a long loose outer garment.

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64. Thevenot, iii, p. 31; Lahori, Vol. 1, pt. ii, p. 5, Vol. ii, pp. 167-68.

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67. *Ain* I (Bloch) p. 46; For Pelsaert's views on the *haram* refer to Jahangir's India, p. 64.

68. *History of Aurangzeb*, V. 459. footnote : on the authority of Abul Fazl, it can be said that Raja Mukanda Deva (1560-68) of Orissa had built a nine-storeyed palace at Cuttack, the eight story of which accommodated the womens apartment (Ain. II (J & S), p. 139). *Tieffenthalar*, a Jesuit missionary. writes that Mukunda deva had four hundred wives and for them he built a separate house (Orissa in the 16th century as recorded in the Halft Iqlam, Proceedings of History congress, Cattack session).

69. Manucci, Irvine Trans, Vol. II, p. 97.

70. Badaoni, II, p. 388.

71. Thevenot, p. 120.

72. Manucci, II, p. 97.

73. *Dastur-ul-amul*-103-a.

74. For Jauhar among the Rajputs refer to James Tod *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan*. II (1920), p. 744-746. Also *Ibid*, I, pp. 363 & 381.

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76. Reference to such dancing and singing public women are available in the contemporary literature, e.g. for 'Nartaki' (dancing women) a reference may be made to 'Kavikankan chandi' (Bangabasi Press, Cal, pp. 123-124); Mangalchandar Geet' (*CU* 1952, p. 116) refers to a 'nartaki named Rupawati. In Ghanaram chakarvarty's Dharma mangal" (Arunodaya Roy, Cal.), we find a reference to a 'Nartaki' engaged for entertainment in the marriage of Lausen with Kalinga (pp. 145-146). In the Chaitaniya Bhagat, (Patrika House, Babar, p. 60), also we find a reference to 'Nartaki' in the first marriage of Nimai (Chaitaniya). In Keshav Das '*Vignan Geeta*' (edited by Shyam Sundar Das Dwivedi, 1954 Ist Ed. Ninth Prabhava, doha 27, p. 91). We find a reference to a 'Vanita' or a prostitute.

77. Badaoni, II. Tells us as to how some famous prostitutes, when privately enquired by the Emperor as to who had reduced them, divulged to him the names of several important Amirs, including the name of Raja Birbal. most of whom were severely reprimanded, published or imprisoned. (Lowe), pp. 311-321.

78. *Ain*, I. Pp. 201-02.

79. Badaoni, p. 312.

80. Bernier's *Travels*, pp. 273-274; Manucci, I, pp. 195-196; Thevenot, p. 71.

81. Manucci, I, pp. 195-196; Also refe rto Thevenot (Indian Travels, p. 71) for the 'Quencheries'.

82. *Bharat Chandra Grathavali* (Bangiya Sahitya Parishad), Pt. II, (the story of Vidya Sundar, pp. 13-14). Prostitutes are still to be found, in large numbers, in different cities and towns of North India.

83. *IHR*, 1988089, Vol. 15, p. 257.

84. Cambridge *Economic History of India*, vol. I, pp. 92-93.

85. *Tarikh-i-Rashidi*, pp. 476-77. The reason Haider Dughlat attributed to the defeat of Humayun at Kanuaj (1540), was the confusion created by these slaves in the Mughal army. He writes, "An Amir of note with his 100 retainers and followers, has 500 servents and *ghulam* (*Ghulams* here mean the slave-domestic), who on the day of battle rendered no assistance to their masters and have no control over themselves... when they lost their masters, they were seized with panic and blindly rushed about in terror", thereby destroying the entire information.

86. *Baburnama*, vol. II, p. 453.

87. *Ain*, vol. I, pp. 161, 162, 163, 165. See the notice of Itibar Khan, one of Babur's enuchs in Bloch mann's translation of the *Ain*, N. Delhi 1977, I, p. 442. Peter Hardy had found three of Baburs and Humayun's slaves. (Encyclopaedia of Islam, vol. II, p. 1088).

88. *Tuzuk*, pp. 69. 71. The Ain list includes Peshrau Khan Shahanaz Khan, Maasir ul Umara. ed. Maulvi Abdur Rahim, Calcutta, 1888, Vol. I, part I. p. 396 and Vol. III. pp. 344-5 also gives an account of Peshrau Khan and Mihtar Khan.

89. It is interesting particularly in the light of the strong positions taken by him against slavery and enslavement quite early in his reign.

90. *Ain*, vol. I, p. 134.

91. He is said to have exclaimed : 'what strength has this handful of weavers to taken upon itself the name of Mastery (*Sahibi*) and to make slaves of the children of men? When Lordship (*Khudawandi*) in truth is only applicable t the incomparable Diety and Service (*Bandagi*) appropriate to the manborn'.

92. *Tuzuk*, p. 317.

93. List of individuals referred with *Chela* suffixed to their name sin 17th-18th centuries.

Chelas	*Name of work*	*In the reign of*	*Source*
1. Nahar Dil	Trooper/Attendant	Shahjahan	Maasir-ul-Umara

			II, pp. 697.
2. Jamal	Trooper/Attendant	Aurangzeb	III, p. 640.
3. Jalal	appear as an officer of repute	Aurangzeb	II, pp. 744-45.
4. Shah Quli	well known officer	Aurangzeb	I, pp. 595.
5. Arif Khan	an officer under the Governor of Lahore	Muhammad Shah	I, p. 604.

94. Manucci, vol. II. p. 583.

95. *Maasir ul Umara*, vol. III, pt. II, pp. 779-780.

96. *Al-Quran* tr. by 'Abdullah Yusuf 'Ali, pp. 270-71, Sura V: 93.

97. Manucci, ii. pp. 5-6.

98. Yar Muhammad Khan. *The Deccan Policy of The Mughals*, Lahore, United Book Corporation, 1971, pp. 82, 109, 122-25; Manucci, ii, p. 150 *Akbar Namah*, iii. (Beveridge), p. 881.

99. *Tuzuki-i-Jahangiri* (text) pp. 150-51.

100. *Akbar Namah*, iii, (Beveridge) p. 881; Ain-i-Akbari (tr. Blochmann), vol. I, p. 201.

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115. Muhammad Yasin, *Social History of Islamic India*, p. 90-91.
116. Mohammad Umar. p. 437.
117. *Journal of Indian History*, April 1976, p. 485. Also see Tarachand, *A Short History of India*, p. 368.
118. *Ibid.*. p. 486.
119. *Ibid.* Also see Muhammad Umar, p. 430.
120. K.M. Panikkar, p. 209.
121. Manucci. Vol. II. p. 5.
122. Zahiruddin Malik, p. 352. Also see Mohammad Umar, p. 420.
123. Rajendra Prasad. *India Divided*, Hind Kitab Bombay, 1946, p. 36.
124. Zahiruddin Malik, p. 353.
125. *History of Banglaesh* ed by Siraj-ul Islam, Asiatic Society, Bangladesh 1992, p. 89.
126. Azizur Rahman Mallick, p. 8.
127. Zahiruddin Malik, p. 352.
128. *Ibid.*
129. Murray T. Titus, *Islam in India and Pakistan*, p. 172.
130. *History of Bangladesh*, p. 105, 116.
131. Aziz Ahmad, p. 49.

132. H.A. Rose, *Religious Life of the Indian people*, Amar Prakashan, Delhi, 1991, p. 629.

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CHAPTER 4

LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

Taken together, all the varied religious, cultural and literary developments and innovations that were a consequence of Islam's contact with Hinduism echoed the Mughal concern for ensuring 'justice' and 'peace' for all. In terms of their theory of social equi-poise (*i'tidal*) and non-sectarian approach to matters of faith, these made political sense, even as they diverged from orthodox Islam. In these attempts at social stability, language played no small role. Persian became a crucial vehicle for the mode and idiom of politics that Mughal rule attempted to propagate. Persian enjoyed status of court language and by the Mughal time it was widely spoken by majority of Indians. The present chapter thus taken to examine the growth and achievements of Persian as prominent language and along side also analyses literary activities in regional languages during Mughas period.

Persian

The Mughals. who took over from about mid sixteenth century, showed unprecedented interest in patronizing Persian literary culture during their rule. Mughal India has been particularly noted for its extraordinary achievements in poetry and wide range of prose writings in Persian. In terms of sheer profusion and variety of themes, this literary output probably exceeded that produced under every other Muslim dynasty. The Mughals were Chaghatay Turks by origin. and we know that. unlike them. Turkey rulers outside Iran – such as the Ottomans in Asia Minor and the Uzbeks in Central Asia – were not quite so enthusiastic about Persian. Indeed, in India too, Persian did not occupy such a

position of dominance in the courts of the early Mughals. Babur's *Babur-Nama*, the story of his exploits in Turkish, and Turkish poetry, enjoyed a considerable audience at his son Humayun's court even after Humayun's return from Iran.[1]

In matters of language, the Mughals had no other choice, and that they simply inherited a legacy and continued with it. In some measure, this conjecture seems plausible. Persian had established itself in a large part of north India as the language of the Mughal elite.[2] The famous line of Hafiz of Shiraz (d. 1398) – 'All the Indian parrots will turn to crunching sugar with this Persian candy which goes to Bengal'[3] – was testimony of a receptive audience for Persian poetry in north India. However, subsequently, there seems to have been a setback to the literature of the language here. There is hardly a notable Persian writer to be found in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries,[4] even while Hindavi texts such as Malik Muhammad Jayasi's *Padmavat* represent the best expression of Muslim *sufi* ideas at this time. Persian does not appear to be very strong under the Afghans either. Most of the Afghans, Babur tells us, could not speak Persian. Hindavi was recognized as a semi-official language by the Sur sultans (1540-55), and their chancellery scripts even bore transcriptions in the Devanagari script. The practice is said to have been introduced by the Lodis.[5] For the extraordinary rise of Persian under the Mughals, the explanation may then be sought more in a convergence of factors within the Mughal regime than within the indo-Persian heritage of preceding Muslim regimes.

Humayun accompanied a large number of Iranians on his return from Iran, where he had taken refuge following his defeat against the Afghans in 1540. They assisted him in reconquering Hindustan in 1555. Later, in the 1560s, Akbar needed Iranian help to, and encouraged them to join his imperial service to overcome the difficulties he faced from ambitious Chaghatay nobles. Before Humayun, the Iranians had helped Babur in 1511, during his fight against the Uzbeks, following the destruction of Timurid power in Heart.[6] All of this Iranian help to the Mughals contributed to the expansion of the frontiers of Persian in Mughal India.

Then there is Akbar's unusual interest in promoting social, cultural and intellectual contacts with Iran.[7] The emperor's success on this account was far from superficial. A very large number of Persian writers and poets came into India. many of them in search of better fortune, others fleeing religious and political persecution in the sectarian Safavid regime.[8] Akbar's India earned the distinction of being termed the place of refuge and the abode of peace (*dar al-aman*) where the wise and the learned would receive encouragement.[9] Migration to India at that time promised material comforts and honoured positions, Iran under the Safavids having turned Shiite, in a very narrow sense of the term. In Mughal India, on the other hand, the space for accommodating opposition and conflict was widening, subsequent to the Mughal policy of *sulh-i-kull* (peace with all). Growing numbers of nonconformist and dissident Iranians thus found a natural refuge in India.[10] As an ambitious ruler in obvious competition with the Iranian shah, Akbar tried to exploit this situation, extending the frontiers of his authority, at least symbolically, over the Safavid

domain. Its intention was to neutralize the awe that the Iranian shah exercised over the Mughal household because of the Iranian help to Babur and Humayun.

The extent to which Iranian scholars in Akbar's court served as his agents in extending his influence within Iran is a moot question. His invitation to such people landed many of them in trouble; some of those he choose to invite in person, and who were among the noted nonconformists, faced drastic punishment and several were even executed by the shah.[11] However, the Mughal emperor's desire to bring 'the exalted [Iranian] community close to him spiritually and materially' prepared the ground for many of them to make India their second home. Iranian talents in the arts, it began to seem, could flourish more in Mughal India than at home. As a consequence, Mughal India drew close to Iran culturally, and Persian attained its status as the first language of the Mughal king and his court.

Among the first literary works in the reign of Akbar – a time when he was consolidating Mughal power in India – was the preparation of a Persian translation of his grandfather's *Babur Nama*. Ironically, the translator was 'Abd al-Rahim Khan, Khan-i-Khanan, the son of Bairam Khan, who had been a poet in Turkish. But it was not just Babur's memoir that was rendered into Persian; the emperor also desired that the soruces of the new court history recording Mughal achievements be compiled in Persian. Then, a work by Humayun's sister, Gulbadan Begum, titled *Humayun-Nama*, was written in Persian, even tough Turkish was the native tongue of the princess and of her husband and Khizr Khwaja Khan. (Antoinette Beveridge, who translated Gulbadan's work into English, suspects that the book was originally composed in Turkish[12]).

Similar was the case of two other accounts of Humayun's time, *Tazkira-i Humayun wa Akbar* and *Tazkirat al-Waqi'at*: both were meant to serve as sources for Abu'l Fazl's *Akbar-Nama*; it was well known that their authors, Bayazid Bayat and Jauhar Aftabchi, respectively, could manage little beyond a 'shaky and rustic' spoken Persian. Jauhar, in fact, got the language of his account revised and improved by the noted writer and lexicographer Ilahdad Faizi Sirhindi before presenting it to the emperor.[13]

Akbar had no formal education. Important books were therefore read out to him regularly, in assembly hall. His library consisted, indeed, of hundreds of prose books and poetical works in Arabic, Persian, Hindi, Greek and Kashmiri, but the books that the emperor heard repeatedly were all in Persian.[14] Akbar, according to one report, could also compose verses in Persian and Hindi; but Mughal sources generally record only his Persian couplets, and we have to wade through these to find the few Hindi verses that are attributed to him. We also know that only Persian poets had the privilege of enjoying extensive royal patronage at Akbar's court.

Among the Muslim rulers of north India, Akbar was probably the first to institute the formal position of *malik al-shu'ara* (poet laureate) at a royal court. To be awarded to a Persian poet only, this position continued until Shahjahan's time (1628-58). The *malik al-shu'ara*', during these Mughal years, were ghazali Marshhadi, Husain Sana'i, Talib Amuli, Kalim Kashani and Qudsi Mashhadi all Iranians; Abu'l Faiz 'Faizi' (1547-95) was the sole exception. Only nine out of the fifty nine rated in Akbar's court as the best among the thousand poets in Persian who had completed a *diwan* or written a *masnawi*, were identified as non-Iranian.[15] Again, a large number of other Persian poets

and writers, 81 according to Nizam al-din Bakhshi and 168 according to Badauni, received the patronage of the emperor or his nobles.[16] Over a 100 poets and 31 scholars were associated with the establishment of 'Abd al-Rahim Khan-i Khanan alone.[17]

Persian thus emerged as the language of the king, the royal household and the high Mughal elite. Akbar's son and successor Jahangir (1605-27) was not particularly accomplished in Turkish, but he cultivated his own style in Persian and wrote his memoirs in elegant prose. He was also a good critic of Persian poetry and composed several verses and *ghazals*.[18] It was for him that Jayasi's Padmavat was translated into Persian, though the work was recognized only as an Indian fable (*afsana-i Hindi*) and not as one on Islamic mysticism in Hindi.[19] The formal abolition of the institution of *malik al-shu'ara*' only slightly affected the supreme status of Persian. Indeed, late seventeenth-century northern India witnessed the emergence of numerous native poets of high standard in Persian, including the great Mirza 'Abd al-Qadir Bedil (d. 1720) and Nasir 'Ali Sirhindi.

Persian as a Official Language of the Mughal Empire

Persian was adopted official language. At court and in offices the entire work was done in Persian. Raja Todar Mal was accredited to make Persian compulsory for official work. If one wanted service in revenue department then Persian learning was most. Large number of khatri and Kayasthas opted for Persian and many of them even excelled Muslim. Hindus had already begun to learn Persian in Sikandar Lodi's time, and Badauni, even mentions a specific Brahman as an Arabic and Persian teacher at his time.[20] Akbar's enlightened

policy and the introduction of 'secular' themes in the syllabi at middle levels 'stimulated a wide application to Persian studies'. Hindus – Kayasthas and Khatris in particular – joined *madrasas* in large numbers to acquire excellence in Persian language and literature, which now promised a good career in the imperial service.[21]

From the middle of the seventeenth century, the departments of accountancy (*siyaq)*, draftsmanship (*insha'*), and the office of revenue minister (*diwan*) were mostly filled by Hindu *munshis* and *muharrirs*. Harkaran Das Kambuh of Multan is the first known Hindu *munshi* whose writings were taken as models by later *munshis*.[22] Chandra Bhan 'Brahman' and Bhimsen were other influential members of this group. Chandra Bhan was rated second only to Abul'l Fazl. He also wrote poetry of high merit.[23] There followed a large number of other Kayastha and Khatri *munshis*, including the well known Madho Ram, Sujan Rai, Malikzadah, Bhupat Rai, Khushhal Chand, Anand Ram 'Mukhlis', Bindraban 'Khwushgu', and a motley crew which make substantive contributions to Indian Persian language and literature. Selections and specimens of their writings formed part of the syllabi of Persian studies at *madrasas*. Certain areas hitherto unexplored or neglected found skilled investigators. chiefly among Kayasthas and Khatris. They produced excellent works. in the eighteenth century, in the philological sciences. The *Mir'at al-Istilah* of Anand Ram 'Mukhlis', the *Bahar-i 'Ajam* of Tek Chand 'Bahar', and the *Mustalahat al-shu'ara'* of siyalkoti Mal 'Warasta' are among the most exhaustive lexicons compiled in India. These Persian grammars and commentaries on idioms, phrases, and poetic proverbs show their authors' keen

interest. admirable research. and unprecedented engagement in the development of Persian in India.[24]

The masters of the Iranian classics Persian thus found an increasingly appreciative audience even among the middle order literati in big and small towns, as well as among village-based revenue officials and other hereditary functionaries and intermediaries. All Mughal government papers, from imperial orders (*farmans*) to bonds and acceptance leters (*muchalka, tamassuk qabuliayt*) that a village intermediary (*chaudhuri*) wrote, were in Persian.[25] Likewise. there was no bookseller in the bazaars and streets of Agra, Delhi and Lahore who did not sell anthologies of Persian poetry. *Madrasa* pupils were in general familiar with the Persian classics.[26] Persian, then, had practically become the first language in Mughal India. Its users appropriated and used Perso-Islamic expressions such as *Bismillah* (in the name of Allah), *lab-bagur* (at the door of the grave), and *bajahannam rasid* (damned in hell) just as much as their Iranian and non-Iranian Muslim counterparts did. They would also now look for, and appreciate, Persian renderings of local texts and traditions. Lest they be forgotten, the religious scriptures were rendered in full into Persian by various Hindu translators.[27]

If. on the one hand, the prospects of a good career and direct access to the ancient scriptures now available in Persian provided incentives for learning Persian to Hindus. on the other. this language acquired a kind of religious sanctity among Muslims. Jamal al-din Inju, author of *Farhang-i Jahangiri*, the first comprehensive Persian lexicon, dwells at length on the point that Persian, together with Arabic, is the language of Islam. The Prophet of Islam, he reports

from various sources, knew and spoke Persian. The prophets, according to Inju, spoke highly of the merits of the people of Pars; he cites verses from the Qur'an in appreciation of the people of Pars for their bravery and courage in fighting for a noble cause. Faith *(iman)*, according to Inju, is integral to their (the people of Pars' character, to the point that they would have acquired the true faith even if it were far from them up in the sky.[28] Inju began to compile the *Farhang* at Akbar's instance, and, since it was completed after the emperor's death, it was dedicated to his son Jahangir.[29]

The work's message was possibly intended to be communicated to Indian converts. whose native language was largely some form of Hindavi. There was certainly a wide application of Persian studies among the *shurafa'* - Muslim landed magnates, revenue-free landholders in the rural areas and those who had a daily allowance (*a'imma, wazifa*) in towns, and petty officials. Even ordinary literate Muslims-soldiers, for instance-were now expected to read simple Persian.[30]

Learning, knowledge and high culture began to be associated with Persian at many levels of Mughal society. Command over good Persian was a matter of pride, and deficiency in elegant expression in Persian meant cultural failure.

In general, Persian was held to be the only effective language in which to express cultural accomplishment, and it came to be recognized as the language of politics in nearly the whole of the subcontinent.[31] This status received nourishment from the Mughal power which sustained it, and the Mughal belief in Persian as the most functional, pragmatic and accomplished vehicle of communication remained unshaken among north Indian populations

long after the demise of the Mughal empire.[32] The long association of the Mughals, and of their supporters and successors, with Persian in the fields of political and military management created a memory of the language as an instrument of conquest. Persian facilitated Mughal triumph. The intrinsic strengths of the language, combined with the emperor's decision supporting it, prepared the grounds for forging links between the court and remote villages.

Again, Persian was valorized because its poetry had integrated many elements from pre-Islamic Persia. It had already served as an important vehicle of liberalism in the medieval Muslim world-as illustrated by the verses of Amir Khusrau and Hasan Sijzi Dihlawi. These factors helped significantly in encouraging and promoting conditions that would accommodate diverse religious and cultural traditions. Among the Persian books which Akbar had read aloud to him every night was the *Masnawi* of Jalal al-Din Rumi. The emperor's non-sectarianism could have been inspired by Rumi's verses, such as the following:

Tu bara-i wasl kardan amdi
Na bara-i fasl kardan amdi
Hindiyan ra istilah-i Hind madh
Sindiyan ra istilah-i Sind madh.[33]

(Thou hast come to unite,
not to separate.
The people of Hind worship in the idiom of Hindi
The people of Sind do so in their own.)

This feature of Persian poetry was not diluted even when Aurangzeb tried to associate the Mughal state with Sunni orthodoxy. Nasir 'Ali Sirhindi, a major poet of his time, echoed 'Urfi's message with real enthusiasm.

Nist ghair az yak sanam dar parda-i dair-o-haram
kai shawad atish du rang az ikhtilaf-i sang-ha.[34]

(In the temple or in the Ka'ba, the image is the same behind the veil.
With a change of flints, does the colour of fire change?)

In fact, at other times, neither mosque nor temple seem illumined by divine beauty: the heart *(dil)* of the true lover is its abode. The message was therefore, at times, that man should aspire to the high place that lovers occupy.

Another poet, Talib Amuli, called for transcending the differences in attitude that emerge because of people's names.

Na malamat-gar-i kufr am na ta'assub-kash-i din
Khanda-ha bar jadl-i Shaikh-o Barhaman daram[35]

(I do not condemn infidelity, I am not a bigoted believer,
I laugh at both, the Shaikh and the Brahman.)

In all these varied ways Persian made a plea for conquest and dominance without staining the victor's apparel with the blood of the vanquished.

Zakhm-ha bardashtim o-fath ha kardim lek
Hargiz as khun-i kas-i rangin nashud daman-i ma[36]

(We have suffered wounds, we have scored victories,
but our skirts were never stained with anyone's blood.)

The desire to build an empire in which both Shaikh and Brahman might live with minimal conflict also necessitated the generation of information about diverse local traditions. Akbar's historian Abu'l Fazl is pot content in his *Akbar-Nama* with a mere description of the heroic achievements of his master; he concludes his account with what he calls the *A'in* (institutes) of Akbar. Of particular note here is the third book of the *A'in,* which contains a survey of the land, the revenues, and the peoples or the castes in control thereof. Above all, the fourth book 'Treats of the social conditions and literary activity especially

in philosophy and law. of the Hindus, who form the bulk of the population, and in whose political advancement the emperor saw the guarantee of the stability of his realm'.[37] As we have noted earlier, in order to make the major local texts accessible and thus to dispel the ignorance about local traditions, Akbar took special care to render Indian scriptures into Persian. The translations of these religious texts were followed in Akbar's own time, and later in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, by Persian renderings of a large number of texts on 'Hindu' religion, law, ethics, mathematics, medicine, astronomy, romance, moral fables and music.[38]

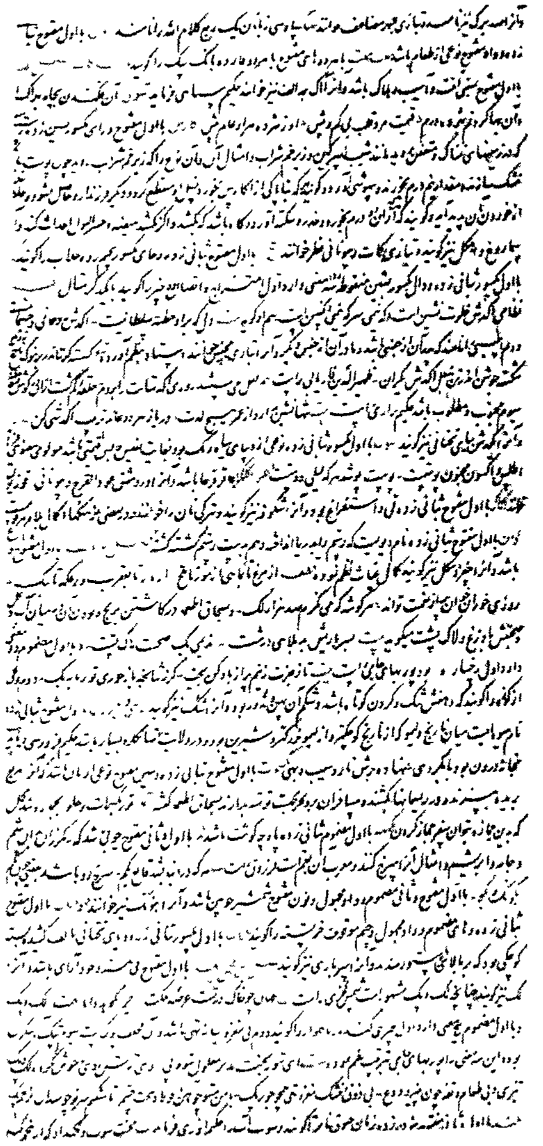


Fig. 8. Leaf from the *Farhang-i-Jahangari* (Persian dictionary) of Jamal ud-Din Husayn Inju, 1607-8

Persian thus promoted the conditions in which the Mughals could build a class of allies out of heterogeneous social and religious groups. While this class cherished universalist human values and visions, the emperor was seen, in the words of the noted Braj poet Keshav Das, as *duhu din ko sahib* (the master of both religions), possessing the attributes of the Hindu god Vishnu.[39] *Din, in* this atmosphere, assumed a new meaning: the king' could blend Hindu social practices and Rajput court rituals with Islam at the Mughal court. These practices ranged from applying *tika* (the vermilion mark) on the foreheads of political subordinates, to *tuladan* (the royal weighing ceremony) and *jharoka darshan* (the early morning appearance of the emperor on the palace balcony), to the public worship of the sun by Akbar-and this entailing prostration facing the east before a sacrificial fire and the recitation of the sun's names in Sanskrit.[40] The influence of the illuminationist philosophy of Shihab al-Din Suhrawardi Maqtul apart[41] order to highlight their affinity with the Rajputs – in whose legends fire and light had special position – that Abu'l Fazl emphasized the legendary origins from light of the Mughals themselves.[42] Mughals married Rajput princesses and allowed them to observe their rituals, ceremoniously, in their palaces. Such alliances entailing cross practices were reciprocated by local Hindu culture in Rajputana and within Rajput society. Rajputs often considered the Mughals as a sub-category of their own *jati.* The Mughal emperor, in their traditions, held high rank and was esteemed sufficiently to be equated with Ram[43], the Kshatriya cultural hero and exemplary Hindu king. The Rajputs identified themselves with the house of the Mughal to the extent that they believe it should be defended in the same way as their own families and royal houses.[44]

Arabic

Arabic has been the language of Islam from its very beginnings, and a vast number of works on theology and jurisprudence have been written in Arabic from the time Muslims first arrived on the subcontinent. *Hadith* literature – the sayings of the Prophet and traditions of his life – flourished, and India has remained a thriving centre for *hadith* studies. The same was true for Sufi works, and for the Arabic grammars used by the students at *madrasas*. The Arabic textbooks were often rhyming, and the students had to learn them by rote. The great works of al-Ghazali (died 1111), and the introduction to Sufi ethics. *Adab al-muridin*, by Abu Najib as-Suhrawardi (died 1165), were in circulation at the time. During the course of the fifteenth century, the writings of the great theosophist Ibn 'Arabi (died 1240), especially the *fusus al-hikam*, 'Ring stones of words of wisdom' achieved great popularity in India. The most important sufi work written in Mughal India was 'The Five Jewels' by Muhammad ghauth Gwaliari, a Sufi primarily associated with Humayun. His complex work, which weaves together elements such as astrology, *kabbalah* and name invocations, had a great influence on popular Islam in India. There are still copies in existence today, in both Arabic and Persian.

Less influential albeit far more remarkable was the *Sawati al-ilham* by Akbar's poet laureate Fayzi (died 1595). This commentary on the Qur'an is an immensely difficult work, because it is written in Arabic entirely without dots, which are normally essential to differentiate most of the consonants, which otherwise look exactly the same. If they are omitted, many verb forms cannot be distinguished, giving rise to innumerable possible misreadings of the text. Fayzi's commentary was dismissed as an 'utterly irrelevant work'. However,

his purpose was to demonstrate his absolute mastery of the Arabic language, and, as he pointed out, the declaration of faith, *la ilaha illa' llah Muhammad-dar-rasul Allah*, also consists of nothing but undotted letters. Bada'uni countered that Fayzi must have written the commentary whilst in a state of ritual impurity, and thereby committed a grave sin.[45]

Despite Akbar's attempts to limit the scope of the language of the Qur'an, theologians continued to compose works in Arabic. In fact, the important *hadith* collection of 'Ali al-Muttaqi from Burhanpur, titled *Kanz al-ummal*, which remained in circulation for centuries, was firmly rooted in the Mughal tradition. A letter sent by Ahmad Sirhindi to the Mughal nobles was also partly written in Arabic. Furthermore, the writings of his contemporary 'Abdu'l hazz Dihlawi (died 1642) were written partly in Arabic and partly in Persian. Great works in Arabic started to appear once more in Aurangzeb's time, when the ruler began taking an interest in reviving traditional Islamic education, which was neither mystical nor syncretistic in orientation. The writings of Mulla Jiwan (died 1717) are relevant in this connection. Jiwan and the ruler read together Ghazzali's groundbreaking work, *Ihya' 'ulum ad'din*, 'Revivification of the Sciences of Religion'. His contemporary Muhibbullah Bihari (died 1707), the Chief Qadi, was a distinguished writer in Arabic, whose *Musallam ath-thubut* (Chronogram AH 1109 = 1697) is considered to be one of the most important of the later textbooks of *usul al-fiqh*, the 'laws of jurisprudence', whilst his *sullam al-'ulum*' 'Scientific Manual', is regarded as the best work on logic ever written in India. Also noteworthy is the great collection of legal precedents, *Fatawa-yi'alamgiri*, which was compiled for Aurangzeb, and which provides an important insight into Muslim law at the end of the seventeenth century. Many new Arabic commentaries on the Qur'an,

and works on Qur'anic recitation, appeared in Aurangzeb's time, also Arabic prayer books, as well as an index to the Qur'an, *Nujum al-furqn* (1691).[46]

Sanskrit-Hindi

In addition to their perennially strong interest in the Turkish language, the Mughal household took an increasing interest in Hindi and other languages of India. After the first Hindi epics, for example *Lor Chanda,* by Maulana Da'ud, had been composed in the fourteenth century, the famous epic *Padmavat* was composed by Malik Muhammad Ja'isi, in Babur's time. Akbar not only loved Persian poetry *but* also enjoyed Hindi songs, such as the ones sung by Sufis *at* the mausoleum of Mu'inuddin Chishti in Ajmer. He is supposed to have been able to speak some Hindi, and Jahangir once commented that a certain Lal Kalawant had taught him everything he knew about Hindi. Historical sources refer to a number of Hindi poets who composed for the Mughal rulers, and Bada'uni relates that Burhanuddin, a Mahdawi from Kalpi, recited his beautiful mystical Hindi poetry in Chunar in 1559.

A year later, Surdas *mahakavi,* 'the great poet', paid a visit to Akbar, and whole families of Hindi poets prided themselves on being under the patronage of the Mughal ruler. One of these poets was proud of the fact that his grandfather had been under the patronage of Akbar, his father under Jahangir's, and he himself under Shah Jahan's patronage. The latter also had a distinguished poet laureate, *maḥakaviray,* by the name of Sundardas, who wrote in Hindi, and was on a par with his colleagues who composed in Persian.[47]

The most famous Hindi poet from the time of Akbar and Jahangir was Tulsi Das (died 1623).[48] He was very close to the great personages at court

such as Raja Man Singh and Abdur Rahim *khan-i-khanan* the latter was his good friend. *Khan-i-khanan* is known to this day as the author of some especially beautiful and tender Hindi poems which are still highly regarded. Abdur Rahim a literary genius of many languages patronized not only Persian poets but also was synthetic to numerous Hindu poets, who sang verses in his praise.[49] Akbar's youngest son, Prince Danyal, loved Hindi poetry, and composed a few verses himself in that language. There was also a Muslim poetess. Taj, who is said to have composed Hindi poems. A number of amirs in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries professed to love the Hindi language, among them the Sufi poet Khub Muhammed Chishti, who lived in Gujarat in Akbar's time. and was the author of a number of important writings in Gujarati and Hindi.

The interest in Hindi poetry lasted throughout the time of Shah Jahan. One poet. Maniram Kavi. sang to commemorate the newly constructed capital city of Shahjahanabad (Delhi). When another Hindi poet, Pandit Rasagangadhar, was named as Shah Jahan's *mahakavlray,* poet laureate, he received his weight in silver.

Since Hindus played an important role as astrologers, a number of works on astrological themes were written in Hindi.

There was already a long-standing interest in Sanskrit writings - the *Amrtakunda* had long ago been translated into Arabic as *Bahr al-hayat,* 'Sea of Life'. However, it was during Akbar's time that the holy language of the Hindus came in for special attention from the government, and a number of original works in Sanskrit were produced by Hindu and Jain authors at the court. A Jain scholar. Samayasmidarjee appeared in Lahore in 1592 to present

his Sanskrit work to Akbar, and received in recognition the title *upadhyaya.* Birbal, whose *nom de plume* Brahman, was an entertainer who was elevated to the status of *raja* at Akbar's court, and honoured with the title *kaviraj*. He became a member of the emperor's innermost circle, the *nauratan*, the 'nine jewels'.

There are numerous instances of Jain poets who wrote in praise of Akbar – one of them did so in no fewer than 128 Sanskrit verses! A generation later, Rudra Kavi sang his songs of praise in Sanskrit for the *khan-i-khanam* 'Abdu'r Rahim, as well as for Akbar's son Danyal and Jahangir's son Khurram, who later became Shah Jahan. He too was later honoured with poems of praise in Sanskrit composed by a Pandit from Benares, primarily in the hope of convincing the emperor to repeal the pilgrimage tax, which had always been a bone of contention with Hindus.

Astronomical, astrological, and medical works were composed in Sanskrit. Akbar received instruction in Hindu legal problems from Sanskrit scholars. The finance minister, Todar Mal, compiled an entire encyclopaedia on Sanskrit, its literature and cultural role.

As time went on, there was increasing awareness of the necessity for a better knowledge of the grammar of the different languages spoken in the empire. In the mid-seventeenth century, an attempt was made to produce a grammar and a handbook of Turkish, and then a Sanskrit grammar was written under Aurangzeb.[50] A Persian-Arabic Sanskrit Dictionary had already been produced in 1643, during the time of Shah Jahan, by a certain Vadangaraya, which concentrated on astronomical terminology.

The *Amrtakunda* was translated quite early into Bengali, and there was another translation in the possession of the followers of the great Sufi Muhammad Ghauth Gwaliari. A certain Nizam Panipati, assisted by two Pandits, completed an abridged translation of the *Yoga vasishta*, which he dedicated to the crown prince Salim Jahangir.

Various translations of collections of Sanskrit fairy tales, which were translated in the sixteenth century, have long since reached the West from the Islamic world, for instance the *Pancatantra* and the *Hitopadesa*. The former appeared as *Mufarih al-qulub*, 'The Heart's electuary', and was dedicated to Humayun. The Tutinama, 'The Chronicle of the Parrot', became known in India in its Persian version, after Zia'uddin Nakhshabi (died 1350) had recited it in this language. This collection was especially popular in Akbar's time, as can be seen from manuscripts illustrated with miniatures.[51] It was also well received in Turkey and Europe. This was also the case with the fables of the *Panchatantra* which had been translated into Arabic as early as the end of the eighth century, under the title *Kalila wa Dimna*. At Akbar's instigation, Abu'l Fazl translated it into Persian under the title *Ayu-i-Danish*, as an earlier version, *Anwar-i suhayli*, 'The Lights of Canopus' which had been completed at the court of Husayn Bayqara of Heart, was too complicated for Akbar. There are many illustrated versions of this work in the Islamic world.

Akbar had still more translation projects in mind. First of all, he wanted that Muslims should get acquainted with the Hindu epic, the *Mahabharata*, so he had that translated, under the title *Razmnama*. Bada'uni, worked in that project.

Bada'uni at his own learnt Sanskrit and he became a great scholar and translated many Sanskrit work into Persian. The translation of Valmiki's *Ramayana* elicited yet more protests from Bada'uni. The *Ramayana* was illustrated in the *khan-i-khanan*'s studio, and then presented to Akbar.[52]

These translations from the Sanskrit in fact inspired Akbar's artists to produce their finest works – the Hindu painters must certainly have enjoyed portraying the colourful legends of their own tradition as finely as possibly. The wonderful scene from the *harivamsa,* of Krishna raising Mount Govardhan, is an inspired portrayal of the Indian legend, and the artists have managed to capture the ineffable religious mood inspired by this miracle.[53]

Turkish

At the time when Babur laid the foundation for the rule of the 'House of Timur' in India by his victory at Panipat in 1526, the use of Turkic terms was widespread.

Many Turkish words designating family relationships, such as *apa,* 'elder sister', *ata,* 'father', *koka,* 'foster *brother', yanga,* 'sister-in-law', also *beg, bey,* 'master / mister', and *khan,* 'Sir', and words derived from them, including the feminine forms *begum, khanum,* are still in use today. First names are often also Turkish, including Babur, meaning 'tiger', and that of the founder of the line, Timur, from *temur,* 'Iron', and also conjunctions such as *tanriberdi,* 'God given', or good omens such as' *qutlugh,* 'fortunate'.

At the beginning of the sixteenth century, the Iranian ruler, Shah Isma'il, a Safawid, and the Mamluk Sultan of Egypt, Qansuh al-Ghauri, both composed poetry in Turkish, as did the Uzbek Shaybanids, who took over the

Timurid Central Asian empire. Turkish verses have even been attributed to the spouse of Shaybani Khan, Mughal Khanum.[54]

In his *Risala-i 'aruz,* the 'Treatise on Prosody', Babur employed the most varied types of Turkish poetical forms as well as those of classical Persian, thus providing the modern reader with an overview of Turkish verse forms, such as *tarkhani, qoshuq,* and the much loved *tuyugh.* Babur was the author of a discourse on the Hanafi legal system (which is used by all Turkic peoples), and even dared to compose his own version of the *Risala-yi walidiyya,* a theological work by the great Central Asian Naqshbandi master 'Ubaydullah Ahrar (died 1490), in 243 lines of simple Turkish verse. He worked on this project in November 1529, in the hope of finding favour with God, so that he would be granted a full recovery from a stomach complaint.

Babur's son Humayun wrote in Persian; another son, Kamran Mirza (who was finally blinded and banished to Mecca because of his incessant political intrigues, and who died there in 1557), was an excellent poet in Turkish, and even his foster brothers were said to be poetically gifted. Kamran was married to the daughter of the Arghun prince, Husayn of Sind. Turkish was spoken at the Arghun court in Thatta, Sind, for the Arghuns originated from the Central Asian region of Afghanistan, as did the Tarkhans who succeeded them in Sind. A few anthologies were compiled at their court of the works of Fakhri Harawi, who wrote about poetic princes *(Raudat as-salatin)* and female poets *(Jawahir al-aja'ib).* These anthologies demonstrate the popularity of Chaghatay in Sind during the early Mughal period. The Turkish language was particularly popular among the army, which was mostly made up of men from Turkish families. The military leader Bairam Khan composed an

excellent *Diwan* in Turkish and Persian, 'and his verses are on every tongue', as Bada'uni remarked.[55] It was Bairam's son, the *khankltanan* 'Abdu'r Rahim, who translated an early Turkish translation of Babur's, memoirs into Persian. He also composed a few rather modest Turkish poems of his own.[56]

Abu'l Fazl reported that Humayun spoke Turkish to one of his servants, and this was corroborated by his valet.[57] The language of their ancestors was kept alive at court, although interest in Turkish waned somewhat under Akbar.

Although Akbar entrusted his son Murad to the Jesuits so that he could learn some Portuguese, he encouraged his grandson Khusrau to pursue Indian studies, whilst Khurram, who later became Shah Jahan, studied Turkish under Tatar Khan.[58] During the reign of Shah Jahan, a close friend of his who was in Iraq buying horses was able to make himself understood in Turkish with the Ottoman Sultan Murad IV.[59]

Regional Languages

Marathi

The Marathi language took its roots about the ninth century of the Christian era, while the earliest inscription in Marathi proper goes back to the tenth century. But the earliest writers whose works are extant in more or less authentic forms belong to the second half of the thirteenth century century.[60] A very early work, the *Chaturvargachintamani* in four parts, prescribes 2000 rites and practices necessary for a Hindu householder, peasant and landlord. It is hardly necessary here to describe the revolt against formal religion by the great *bhaktas* and saints of Maharashtra, beginning with the great Jnaneshvara of Pandharpur (who died about 1200), whose cardinal doctrine was that there are no ranks or classes before God and all are equal in His view. He was followed

by a number of other saints who sang the praises of God in the Marathi language, such as Namdev, Tukaram, Eknath, Ramdas and others whose names are household words in Maharashtra and whose teachings transcended the barriers of race and geography.

Perhaps the most interesting trend in the Marathi language was the introduction of Arabic and Persian words, a phenomenon which Was strangely accelerated with the assumption of sovereign power by Shivaji in 1674. This movement had been at work even during the Nizam Shahi rule, especially after Malik 'Ambar, whose regulations constituted the model of the Maratha revenue system.

Kashmiri

Fourteenth century poetess Lalla Ded originated the Kashmiri language. Habba Khatun a village girl and the wife of an exiled ruler of Kashmiri is often taken to begin with the lol-lyrics or love-verses in Kashmiri literature. Habba Khatun composition retain their popularity in the lose of the valley. On the other hand Rupa Bhavani (d. 1720) composed devotional verses in the Bhakti tradition.[61]

Punjabi

The 13th century saint Shaikh Farid Sufic verses flourished in Punjabi language and literature by the Guru Nanak (d. 1539). The Adi Granth (1603-04) compilation by Guru Arjan in which the verses of the Guru as well as Shaikh Farid and other monotheists (those being of languages other than Punjabi) was an important landmark in the history of the Punjabi language. The janamsakhis religions lose of Bhai Gurdas continued to enrich Punjabi, so also the *Dasam* Granth of Guru Gobind Singh (d. 1708), though this is only partly

in that language.[62] Bulhe Shah (1680-1757), was the great poet. His sufic verse could speak up in the stain of Kabir, against the uselessness of ritual and religious hypocrisy.[63] The romance of Hir and Ranjah composed by Damodar (c. 1600) presented the secular element in Punjabi, but then given it most popular version by Warsi Shah (c. 1760).

Bengali

The importance of Bengali language can be seen well before the sixteenth century. Brindavandas *Chaitanyamangal* (d. 1540). *Chaitanya Charitamrita* (c. 1595) is a very nice biography of *Krishndas Kaviraj* relating to Vaishnav faith. The Chaitanya cult take the much interest in Bengali called Brajbuli based on Krishna and Radha loves. Govinddas Kaviraj was a notable master of Bengali language of this last.

Mukundaram Chakarvalis's great narrative poem *Chandimangal* followed the Shaivite tradition in Bengal for Bengali literature. About 1649, *Dharmamangal* dedicated to the deity Dharma is an autobiographical poem composed by Rupram. Rameshwar Bhattacharya Shivasan Kirtan (1710) is a remarkable poem in which Shiva and Gauri appears not as a god and goddess but as a poor peasant and the wife of a poor man.

Mansimha and *Vidyasundar* historical and erotic romance poetry respectively is a great work of Bharat Chandra Ray (d. 1760). Persian and Hindi words and idioms used by him than his precursors.[64]

Gujarati

Bhalan (d. 1554) a writer who by his translation *Kadambari*, emphasized allegiance to classical Sanskrit and composed devotional songs (garabis) on Krishna and his amours. Mira bai contemporary to Balahan was

the authoress of devotional songs in Gujarati, Rajasthani and Braj. Nasri Mehta and Akho (d. 1656) works in Gujarati are some value and so are those of Prem Nand who was considered the greatest poet of Gujarati in the 17th century.[65]

Oriya

Another important language related to Bengali came in the light was Oriya. For the continuation of the tradition of Puranic Kavya (poems narrating legends) and a growth of Bhakti poetry. Balram Das *Ramayana* in c. 1500, Jaganatha Das *Bhagavarta Purana*, Ram Chandra Patnaik *Harvali* flourished in Orissa. Vrajanath Badjina *Samarataranga* a poem about war and chivalry with the Oriya-Maratha a conflict emphasized the importance of the context.[66]

Assamese

Vaishanvite Bhakti poetry by Sharharadeva (d. 1568) and buranjis or historical chronicles of Sino-Tibetan played important role form later half of the seventeenth century for the development of Assamese language. Alongwith the translation of *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana* some of the Puranas[67]; the works on astronomy, arithmetic, treatment of elephants and horses completed into Assamese language.

Sindhi

Sindhi, the language spoken in the lower Indus region, was one of the richest of all the Indian languages, with a centuries-old oral tradition of ballads, legends, proverbs and riddles. In Sindhi, as in other new Indian languages, it is sometimes difficult to determine whether a poem on the theme of love and longing is of Muslim origins, or whether it was an expression of Hindu *bhakti-mysticism,* since the love of God and the longing of the soul (which was

portrayed as feminine) were expressed in almost exactly the same terms in Sufi and Islamic poetry.

Throughout Humayun's years of wandering in Sind, during which his son Akbar was born in Umarkot; a *qtidi* in Sehwan, on the Indus, was composing short mystical verses. Qadi Qadan, as he was called, is thought to have been a Mahdawi who had arrived in Sind from Gujarat around 1500.[68]

Even though the *khan-i-khanan* 'Abdu'r Rahim was very interested in mystical poetry, he probably had little familiarity with the verses of Qadi Qadan when he besieged Sehwan in 1590. However, Sindhi balladeers apparently went to the court of Akbar, who liked to listen to their words of wisdom. Mir Ma'sum, an educated Sindhi who was a friend of the *khan-i-khanan,* was not only a good storyteller and calligrapher (who wrote the inscription on the entrance gate at Fatehpur Sikri), but was also a doctor, whom Akbar sent as his ambassador to the Persian court.[69]

After Sind had been annexed to the Mughal empire in 1591, the province continued its isolated existence under a number of governors, whose activities are documented in a series of somewhat critical Persian chronicles from the seventeenth century.[70]

Innumerable Persian works were produced in Sind during the course of the seventeenth century, with many new adaptations of traditional material - for ,instance. the familiar Qur'anic tale of Yusuf and Zulaykha fused with traditional Sindhi love stories.

Poetry in the vernacular gradually increased in importance. Shair 'Abdu'l Karim of Bulrri[71] composed some charming *dohas,* in which he appears to have adapted themes from popular tradition with allusions to the

famous lovers of the Indus Valley and the Punjab. This process was developed beautifully in the work of his great grandson Shah 'Abdu'l Latif of Bhit (1689-1752).

These were terrible times for Sind and for the entire Mughal empire, for after the death of Aurangzeb, in fact during the last rears of his life, the empire was collapsing, and both Delhi and the provinces were raven by internecine fighting amongst the various factions.

Urdu

During the last phase of the Mughal period the Urdu literature developed. The Mughal court and armies used to bring mixture dialects including Punjabi called Urdu (language of the camp and bazaar). It is borrowed from Persian language. It acquired a definite form, content and style; it agained the position of a literary language and could rival Persian in that respect. Though deeply saturated with Persian literary and cultural heritage, the Urdu poets and writers made enough use of the Indian landscape in the pentrayal of Characters and situations particularly in the composition of qasida, masnavi, hijju and marsiya if not of ghazal.[72]

Regarding Urdu an attempt was made not in Delhi (mixed with Persian and Hindi but in the Deccani style first perhaps. Mohammad Quli Qutub Shah (d. 1723), Jafar Zatah (d. 1713), Wali (d. 1723), Sauda (d. 1780-81) and lyricist 'Mir' (d. 1810) were took keen interest in prose and poetry for the development of the Urdu. Hence a new "Hindustani" dialect emerged from the mixture of the literary Hindi (written in Devanagri script) and Urdu (written in Arabic script).[73]

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42. Compare *Akbar-nama*, vol. 1, p. 122.

43. Norman P. Zeigler, 'Some Notes on Rajput Loyalties during the Mughal Period', in Alam and Subrahmanyam, *The Mughal State*, pp. 168-210.

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46. Marshall, *Moghuls in India*, no. 200, Arabic commentary on the Qoran; no. 198, *Kunst der Koranrezitation;* no. 1657, *Najat al-qari*, 'Deliverance of the Reciter of the Koran'; no. 1248, *Nujum al-furqan*, an index of the Koran, compile for Aurangzeb.

47. Ghani, *Persian Language and Literature*, III, p. 269.

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49. There is a whole series of Hindi publications dealing with *khan-i-khanan's* Hindi poetry; see the bibliography by C.R. Naik, *'Abdu'r Rahim Khan-i khanan and his Literary Circle*, Ahmadabad, 1966, p. 551.

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65. Cf. K.M. Jhanveri, '*Gujarati*', in: *ibid.*, pp. 478-82.

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CHAPTER 5

ARCHITECTURE AND PAINTING

Mughal Architecture

The Muslim architecture of India, like the Islamic style in other countries, is primarily derived from the ancient vaulted architecture of Mesopotamia, as modified by later a developments under the Sassanids, and is therefore closely related to the style in vogue at Baghdad in the days of the Abbasid Khalifas. The dome which is so prominent a feature of Mughal building, and which is unknown in Hindu architecture, has been supposed by some scholars to be a copy of the bell-shaped tents of the Turcomans of Central Asia: but whatever be its origin, the dome, like the arch, was well known in Baghdad, and then spread throughout the Islamic world.[1] When the Muslims first arrived in India, the Hindu masons whom they were forced to employ in the erection of their mosques and other monuments were unable to construct arches with true key-stones in the Muslim style; but by the fourteenth century they had overcome this disability and no longer depended on their own structural methods in carrying out the designs of their conquerors. On the other hand, contact with Hindu ideas and architectural style exercised a gradual but steady influence upon Islamic designs, and was probably directly responsible for the variety style which characterized the Muslim buildings erected in different parts of India during pre-Mughal times. The simple massiveness, for example, of the monuments of the Tughlak dynasty has little in common with the Islamic style which developed under the independent Muslim Kings of Bengal; the styles associated with the Sultanates of Bijapur and Golkunda

differ from one another. and are both easily distinguishable from the beautiful provincial style of Gujarat, which bears very markedly the impress of Hindu and Jain architecture.[2]

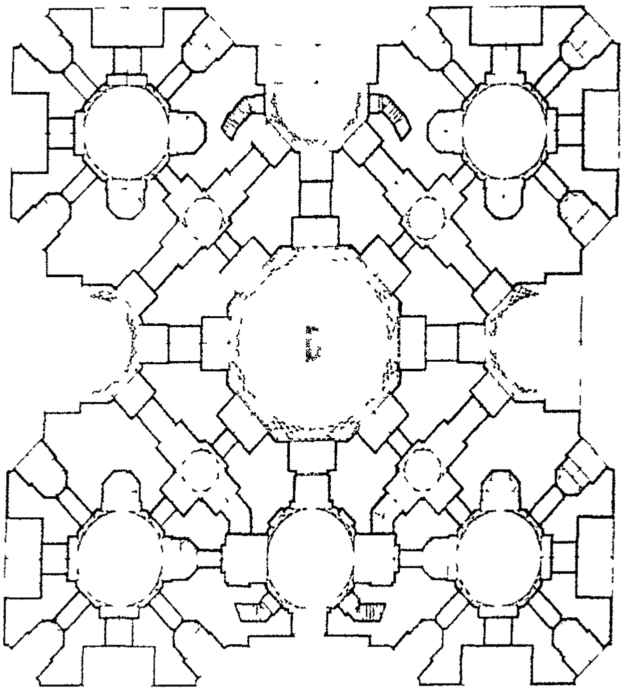


Fig. 9. Floor-plan of the mausoleum of Humayun, Delhi

Hindu influence upon architectural styles lasted throughout the Mughal period. and expressed itself in the narrow columns, pilasters, corbel brackets, and other ornamental features of Mughal buildings. It was particularly noticeable during the reign of Akbar, who, while showing a certain partiality for the culture and language of Persia, drew deliberately, in matters of architecture. upon Hindu sources, thus consecrating his rupture with his native land. The gradual submission of the Mughal imperial line to the influence of their Indian environment is seen, indeed; most clearly in the disposition of their tombs. The ancestor lies at Samarkand, Babar wished his body to be carried back from Agra to Kabul, Humayun is at Delhi, Akbar at Sikandarah and Shah Jahan at Agra'.[3] But while the buildings of the Mughal period owed

much to Hindu ideas of decorative detail, as can be seen in the ornamental pillars at Fatehpur Sikri and the corbel brackets of Shaikh Salim Chishti's tomb. the type and architectural principles of them all are fundamentally Muhammadan. This is particularly evident in such buildings of Babur and Humayun as still survive; they exhibit no traces of Indian influence and whether intact or half-ruined, are distinctly foreign and Muhammadan. The salient features of Mughal architecture are the pronounced dome, the splender turrets at the corners, the palace halls supported on pillars, and the Indo-Saracenic. gate. 'which takes the form of a huge semi-dome sunk in the front wall and bearing an admirable proportion to the building, while the actual *entrance is a small rectangular opening under this arch.*[4] *The finest example of* this style of gateway is the *Buland Darwaza* at Fatehpur Sikri, which was erected in 1601-2 to commemorate Akbar's conquest of Gujarat.

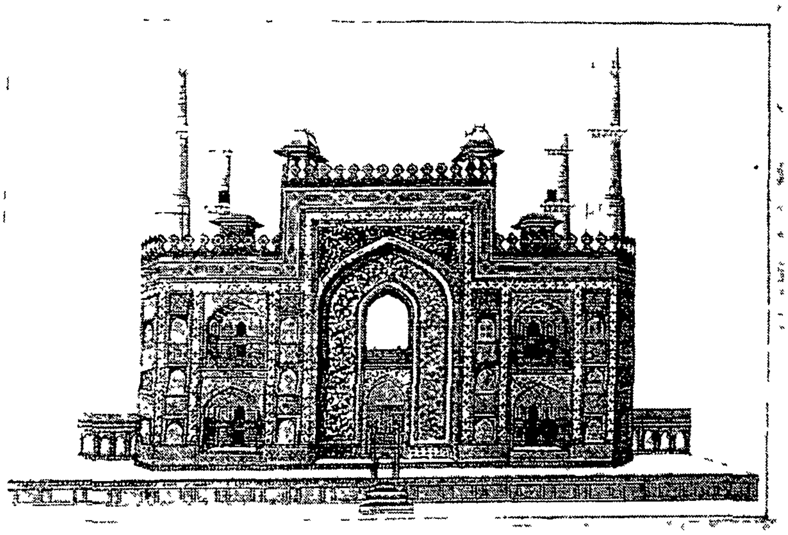


Fig 10. The Gateway of Akbar's tomb at Sikandra.

With the exception of Aurangzeb, all the early Mughal Emperors were great builders. Brief though his Indian reign was, Babur found leisure to summon from Constantinople pupils of the famous Albanian architect, Sinan,

who had designed many important buildings in the Ottoman Empire, and set them to work on mosques and other architectural monuments commemorating his conquest of Hindustan. He mentions in his *Memoirs (Babur-nama)* that 680 Indian stone-masons worked daily on his buildings at Agra, and that nearly 1,500 were employed daily in his buildings at Sikri, Biana, Gwalior and other places.[5] Only two of his buildings survive – a large mosque built at Panipat after his victory in 1526, and the Jami Mosque at Sambal in Rohilkhand. Time has dealt hardly with Humayun's buildings also, for of those which he found leisure to erect during his stormy career, only two remain in semi-dilapidation. One of these a mosque at Fathabad in the Hissar District of the Punjab, is a massive well proportioned building, decorated in the Persian manner with enamelled tiles, and was probably built about 1540, when Humayun was on his way to Sind. Probably the best designed and most dignified building in the Indo-Persian style erected in northern India before the reign of Akbar is the mausoleum of Humayun's rival, Sher Shah, built on a high plinth in the midst of a lake at Sahasram in the Shahabad district of Bengal. Here the architecture is wholly Muhammadan, but Hindu corbelling and horizontal architraves are used in all the inner doorways; and the style generally has been described as intermediate between 'the austerity of the Tughlak buildings and the feminine grace of Shah Jahan's masterpiece'.[6]

With the accession of Akbar, Mughal architecture attained unrivalled magnificence; and the monuments of his reign which have been bequeathed to posterity full justified the declaration of Abu-l Fazl that 'His Majesty plans splendid edifices and dresses the work of his mind and heart in the garment of stone and clay'.[7] It is certain that Akbar, with his usual thoroughness, mastered every detail of the working of his department of Public Works, and himself

supplied ideas which were translated into practical form by the experts whom he gathered around him; and consequently, whether we study the buildings of Fathpur Sikri, the Jahangiri Mahal, at Agra, the tomb of Muhammad Ghaus at Gwalior, or the mausoleum of Humayun at Delhi, we detect the impress of superlative tact and genius. Or did Akbar confine his activities to the great masterpieces of architecture which have made his name world-famous; he also built fortresses, villas, towers, *sarais*, schools, tanks, and wells; he fixed the wages of workmen and the price of building materials. And while he still adhered to Persian ideas, inherited doubtless from his mother, his natural attraction toward Hinduism, combined with his deliberate policy of binding his Hindu subjects to the imperial throne, led him to introduce Hindu styles of architecture in many of his buildings. This fashion appears very clearly in the Jahangiri Mahal at Agra fort, which might well pass for the palace of a Hindu Raja; it is visible again in some of the buildings at Fathpur Sikri, a city which conformed resolutely with the traditions of the conquered nation, and in which the conqueror asserted himself in only one building, for that matter incomparable – the mosque. On the other hand, Akbar's Persian sympathies are portrayed in the famous mausoleum of Humayun at Old Delhi, which was completed early in 1569; although even in this case the ground plan of the tomb is Indian, and the outward appearance of the edifice is differentiated from the purely Persian style by the free use of white marble, which was uncommon in Persia, and by the absence of the coloured tile decoration, which Persian builders so greatly favoured. This building is also remarkable as offering the earliest example in India of 'a double dome with slightly swelling outline, standing on a high neck' – a form of construction which appears in the tombs

of Timur and Bibi Khanam at Samarkand, and is ultimately traced back to the Umayyad mosque of Damascus, built towards the close of the eleventh century.[8]

Speaking generally, the buildings of Akbar's reign combine both Hindu and Muhammadan features – sometimes the former, at other times the latter, predominating – and are therefore correctly described as being of mixed Hindu-Muhammadan style. Fathpur-sikri, which he built around the hermitage of the pious Shaikh Chishti, and which was the seat of the imperial court from 1569 to 1584, constitutes perhaps the most remarkable evidence of Akbar's genius. 'It is a more complete creation than Versailles in this sense, that subsequent reigns have added nothing to it. And Versailles displays one fault of taste – the one only – that of repeating indiscreetly the servile apotheosis of a personality which was certainly imposing by the sense of its perogative and dignity, but which was intellectually limited and devoid of philosophy and human anxiety. Many of the principle buildings of Akbar's deserted city still remain almost intact, but much has been irretrievably ruined. Yet enough survives – the Khwabgah ('house of dreams'), the record-room, the *Diwan-i-Khass*, the *Diwan-i-Aam*, the great mosque and so on – to enable one to realize the former magnificence of the mass of buildings which, crowning the summit of a red sandstone ridge, formed the acropolis of the richest monarch in the world. A modern traveller has remarked that it is difficult to imagine a more picturesque conception than that of the *Diwan-i-Khass*.

> "A central pillar, whose exquisite carvings recall, by a perhaps voluntary coincidence, the ornaments of the tomb of the emperor at the top of the mausoleum of Sikandarah, itself, one would say, conceived in a recollection of the terraces of

> the Panch Mahal, where the princesses used to come to sleep, spreads into an immense circular capital. From this capital, four balconies, with low open trellis stone balustrades, diverge to the corners of the pavilion, where secondary platforms communicate with the ground by staircases. The emperor, like a god in the cup of a lotus flower, sat in the centre of the corbelled capital; a minister occupied each of the angles; through the bays, either open or closed with screens of interlaced stone, the eye discovers the whole of the wide and almost circular horizon. The will of the master here radiated like a glowing hearth to the four corners of the sky, shot forth to the confines of empire; and I know no more poetic realization of a will of power and responsibility'.[9]

Perhaps the grandest feature of Akbar's city is the *Buland Darwaza-the* Great Portal, built of marble and sandstone, which forms the southern gateway of the Mosque. High authority has described it as one of the most perfect architectural achievements in the whole of India; and the effect which it produces on the mind of the layman can be best understood from the following description recorded by a French visitor to Fathpur Sikri:

> 'This mass. one hundred and fifty feet high, the central arch opening upon a half-dome, the four minarets at the four corners of the trapezium that forms the plan, the broad steps that lead up to the entrance, the declivity in the ground continuing the slope of the steps make of this gate a monument unequalled in its kind, Seen from below, on the edge of the' village whose humble hovels are heaped up at the foot of the hill, the effect is sublime. It lies in the very disproportion between that titanic mass and its surroundings, in the proud upward leap of that stone canopy, whose minarets look like the poles that formerly, in the native steppes, carried skins of beasts or motley carpets over the conqueror in state. I know only one other monument in which the verticals reach the same pitch of magnificence, and that is Beauvais Cathedral. It is the same, *Hosannah in excelsis*! For the rest, the Moslem epigraph, with so just a lyricism, exclaims:

"Its mihrab is like the broad browed morning, its pinnacles like the Milky Way, its grate cries aloud!..."

> A marvelous revelation, an inspired translation of the feeling that takes hold of you before that formidable arch, whence seems to issue as it were a shout of victory, continuous, louder than the trumpets of a hundred Fames, from the top of the pedestal that lifts it proudly on the horizon of Hindustan. And the great cry of pride rings out over the rich plains, the peaceful towns, the unsubdued jungle, to die away absorbed in the astonished murmur of the southern shores.

Then one thinks of other words, those whose threefold riband forms the rich rectangle in which, according to the almost invariable rite, the arch is cut out with an august simplicity. They say:

> "The world is a bridge: pass over it, but build no house upon it. The world endures but an hour: spend it in prayer; who sees the rest? Thy greatest richness' is the alms which thou hast given. Know that, the world is a mirror where fortune has appeared, then fled: call nothing thine that thy eyes cannot see".
>
> 'And mingled with the admiration of those pure lines, of that material grandeur. of that realized miracle of art, is an element of thought, veneration and melancholy that makes up one of those rare sensations of completeness which time cannot impair in our memory and which we would buy at the cost of any exile'.[10]

It can be safely asserted that nothing like Fatehpur Sikri will ever be created again. For, in the words of Fergusson, it is simply a reflex of the mind of the great man who built it.[11] Though long abandoned and bearing the scars of time. it still forms a most impressive revelation of a mighty personality.

Akbar built much more besides the masterpieces of architecture mentioned above. As, for example, the buildings at Sikandarah, the Akbari Mahal at Agra. the fort at Attock, and the Allahabad fort, which William Finch was told had taken more than forty years to be built and part times employed twenty thousand workmen of various denominations to work. Five thousand men were still at work upon it when Finch visited Allahabad.[12] The number of

edifices erected during Jahangir's reign was less as compared the architectural record of his father. On the other hand, some of them are of exceptional interest and merit. Nothing could be more beautiful than the tomb of Itimadu-d-daula, near Agra, erected about 1628 by the Empress Nur Jahan. Built entirely of white marble, it is decorated with *pietra* dura work in semi-precious stones, which emulates, the style of decoration in Shah Jahan's reign. Among other notable monuments of Jahangir's reign at Agra, Lahore and elsewhere, *is* the great mausoleum of Akbar at Sikandarah, which was erected under the Emperor's orders between 1605 and 1612. The plan of the tomb, which is distinguished by five square terraces, diminishing as they ascend, resembles to some extent the Panch Mahall, Akbar's five-storied pavilion at Fatehpur Sikri, and is supposed by some authorities to have been copied from the Indian Buddhist viharas. It bears, however, a resemblance, at least equally close, to one of the two main types of ancient Khmer architecture, found in Cambodia and Cochin-China; and, on that account, another authority suggests that the design of Akbar's mausoleum may have been suggested by craftsmen at Jahangir's Court, hailing from the Far East.[13] The suggestion is not wholly improbable, particularly as both Fergusson and another authority agree that the design of the uppermost floor must have included a light dome over the cenotaph. which was never built- a vaulted roof to the top story being a recognized feature of the ancient Cambodian buildings of Khmer origin.

It was, however, in the reign of Shah Jahan that the Indo-Persian style of architecture attained its supreme beauty. The cost of the buildings which he erected was colossal – according to one estimate the Taj Mahal alone cost about 4½ million pounds sterling – for besides the palaces, gardens, the Pearl Mosque and the Taj Mahal at Agra, and the palaces, the *idgah* and Jama

Masjid at Delhi, he built palaces and gardens at Lahore; a fort, palace, and mosque at Kabul; royal buildings at Kashmir; various buildings at Ajmer, Ahamedabad and other places; paè¹ces at Mukhlispur; and forts at Kandahar and elsewhere. No precise estimate of the expenditure on these buildings is available, but the cost must have run into crores. The style of all Shah Jahan's principal edifices is essentially Persian, but is at the same time clearly distinguished from Persian ideas by the lavish employment of white marble and incomparable decoration. A salient feature also of the work of his reign is the open-work tracery which ornaments the finest buildings and the apt combination of spacious design with an almost feminine elegance'. The Taj Mahal, which has been described by so many admirers and is certainly one of the unrivalled beauties of this world, was commenced in 1631, a few months after the death of the Empress Mumtaz Mahall, and was not finally completed until 1653. Twenty thousand men were employed daily on its construction. The precise identity of the architect has always been doubtful, and Vincent Smith's conclusion that the Taj Mahal is 'the product of a combination of European and Asiatic genius' is denied by Maulvi Moinu-d din Ahmad, who awards the credit of the design to one Isa Afandi, a 'turko-Indian', and gives reasons for disbelieving the supposed participation of French or Italian experts in the plan and construction.[14] In Shah Jahan's original design a monumental bridge was intended to span the river, uniting the Taj Mahal with an equally splendid mausoleum for the Emperor himself. But the conception was never realized; and nothing now joins the river's two banks, 'except at times a flight of green parakets, skimming over the surface of the water, emerald arrows stolen from the golden quiver of the twilight, a message from desire to death over the water softly flowing'.[15]

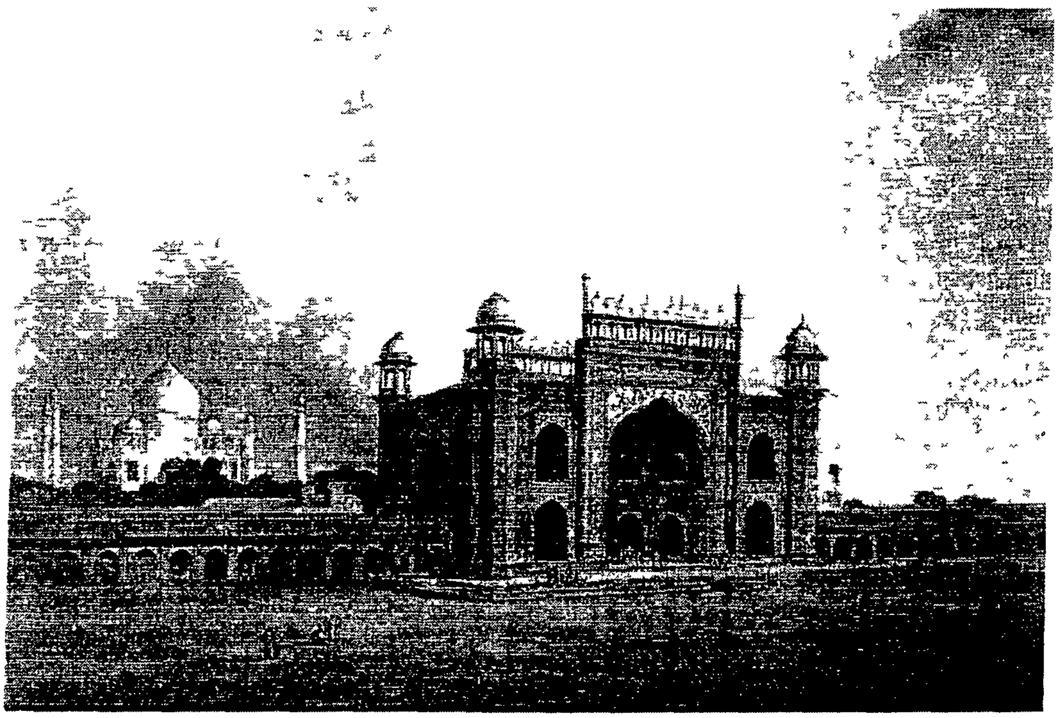


Fig 11 Thomas Daniell, *The Great Gate leading to the Taj Mahal*, Agra, between 1786 and 1793

Of the two palaces which Shah Jahan built at Agra and Delhi, the former, according to Fergusson, is in better taste, while the latter, if conceived as a whole, would have revealed the personality of shah Jahan as clearly as Fathpur Sikri reflects that of Akbar. Both palaces were magnificent, particularly that of Delhi, in which the *Diwan-i-Khass* with its original ceiling of silver, valued by Tavernier at twenty six millions of French money, and its mingled decorative scheme of marble, gold, and fine stones, further added to its magnificence

But perhaps the most perfect architectural legacy of Shah Jahan's reign is the Moti Masjid or Pearl Mosque in Agra Fort. In that incomparable building the style introduced by the Great Mughals reached the zenith of purity and elegance

"There is something more intense in the mystic impression of those denticulated arches, those white and blue perspective, than in the flight of the Gothic perpendiculars. The sense of the divine given by the gigantic Tamil pagodas, the largest in the world, seems confused, extravagant, muddy, beside the fervour that shines forth from this act of faith and grace hewen in the most perfect substance brought by the central fires. The serenity of the Greek temple has not that passion petrified in beauty. The one welcomes the divinity born of the play of the elements, the child of the clouds, the waves and the winds, blossoming from the original myth with no more pains than the flower from the bud; the other, to which the divinity is the inconceivable, calls to it, evokes it in a poem of fervent stone. It is the same difference as between joy and rapture. Yet let it not be imagined that there is anything strained or sorrowful in the sensation given by the Pearl Mosque. The first emotion is rather one of peace and serenity. It is only later that one begins to feel the ardour which the purified meditation of the believer would there be capable of attaining. Then, a vibration as a metal at white heat sends its waves coursing over those marbles. Next, all is peace once more; the sanctuary is alive, a mysterious soul throbs there between bliss and ecstasy...[16]

With the accession of Aurangzeb the style of Mughal architecture rapidly degenerated. Aurangzeb built little, as compared with his predecessors, and of several buildings of passable merit erected during his reign, the best perhaps is the mosque at Lahore which was completed in 1674. It is a copy of the great mosque of Delhi, but distinctly 'inferior to that noble building'. Anothr building of some distinction is Zinatu-n-nissa's mosque at Delhi. Even his own tomb at Aurangabad is insignificant, and seems to bear mute witness that the Muslim creative genius which built two such peerless monuments as

the Taj Mahal in Hindustan and the Alhambra in Spain, had fulfilled its destiny, and that the great figures of the Timurid dynasty.

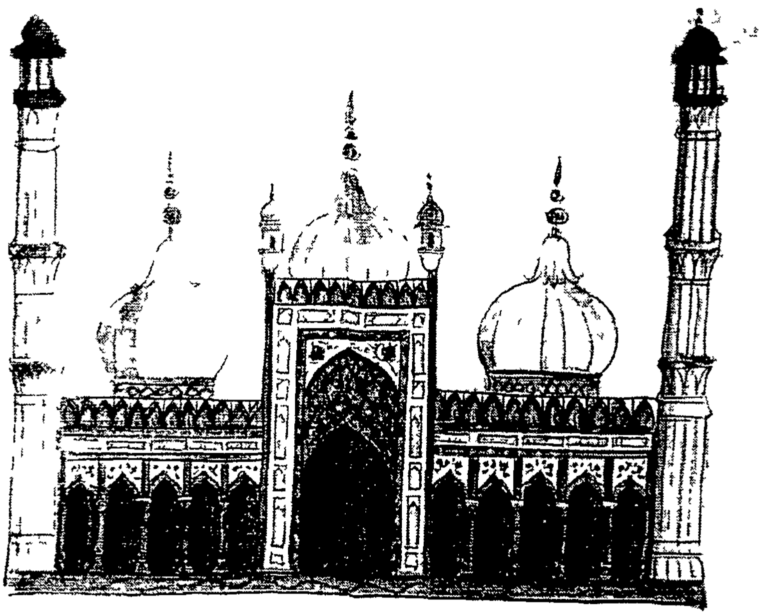


Fig 12 Delhi's Friday mosque, leaf from an album of drawings by a Punjabi artist. c. 1890.

Secular Buildings

There are many secular buildings worthy of note. One particular Mughal contribution to architecture was the hammam, the bathhouse, which followed the standard Near Eastern pattern with a room, or perhaps several, for undressing and dressing, the cold room, and the bathing room itself.

The hot water was brought in through terracotta piping. There were also plentiful latrines. Fatehpur was known for the large number of hammams there. Not only the rulers, but also wealthy benefactors had hammams built in their cities of residence, which were often of considerable architectonic beauty. Asaf Khan, Jahangir's brother-in-law, had a very beautiful bathing facility built in

Agra; and the one built by *khan-i-khanan* 'Abdu'r Rahim in Burhanpur is very famous.[17]

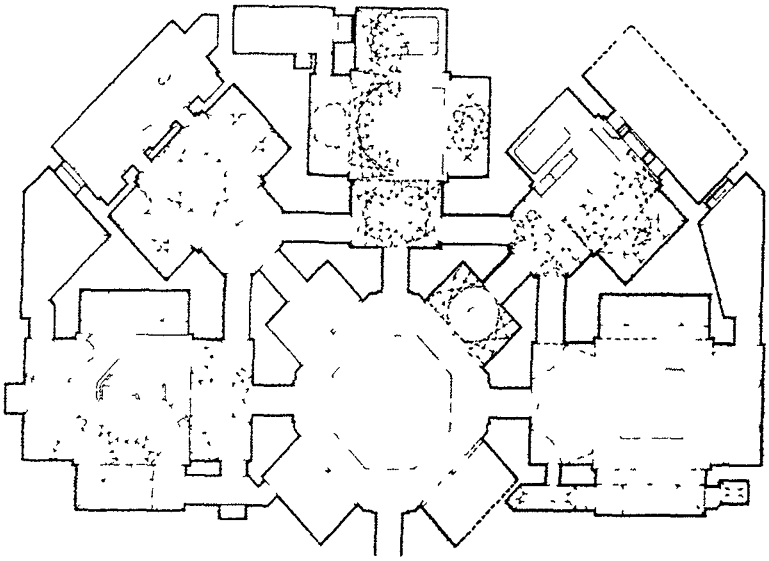


Fig 13. Plan of khankhanan 'Abdu'r Rahim's public bath houses in Burhanpur (1607-08)

Because of the Mughals' extensive trading activities, important trading routes were built between the habours and the capital city, and between the most important centers for the production of goods and agricultural produce. These routes were also important centers for the production of goods and agricultural produce. These routes were also important militarily. Babur was the first to build a road between Agra and Kabul. Akbar and Jahangir had routes surveyed and milestones placed at intervals of one kos (approximately two miles, or three kilometers). The milestones, according to Babur and others, were often decorated with horns. In Jahangir's time, water fountains were placed at three kos intervals, and several rulers and amirs had caravansaries built for the convenience of travelers, with numerous guestrooms of various sizes, as well as stables for animals, and storage space for goods. These caravansaries were often architectonically very beautiful, such as the one

established by the *khank-i-hanan* 'Abdu'r Rahim between Burhanpur and Asırgarh, with its elegant pointed bow construction. Travellers often complained about the state of the roads; however, that does not lessen the value of these facilities. One of their specialities were the *bulghur-khana* (no longer in existence), at which free food was given to the poor, so very important in times of famine.[18]

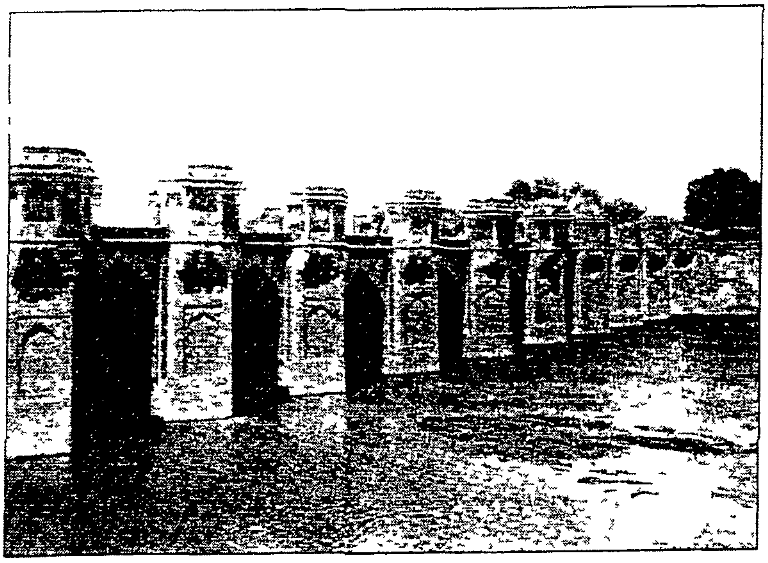


Fig 14 Mughal bridge, 1564-68, Jaunpur

Finally, bridges were built to improve connections between the important cities. One significant bridge was constructed in Jaunpur during Akbar's time by his *khan-ı-khanan* Mun'im Khan (1569).

Mughal painting

The history of Mughal painting resembles that of architecture. It flourished while the Empire flourished, undeclined when it decayed. And just as the style and design of the Mughal buildings were originally introduced by Akbar from Persia and were insensibly transformed by the contact of Hindu ideas into the mixed Indo-Persian or Mughal style, so the art of painting in the

Mughal age, though Persian in origin, was actually the joint product of Persian and Hindu ideas, and developed into the two schools of paintings, known as Mughal and Rajput, both of which owe their success to the incentive and support of Mughals and Rajput Rajas. Hindu painting, which was founded on the pictorial art of the Buddhist priests of early ages, is essentially different from the Persian art, which was closely connected with the artistic schools of the Far East; but when the early Mughal Emperors introduced the later style of painting into India, it rapidly attracted 'many of the indigenous artists of India – hereditary painters – trained for generations to the use of the brush', and was adapted by them to suit their own particular ideas. The methods of the Hindu painters are not dissimilar to those of the Persian school, but 'in its motives, in sentiment, and in temper generally', the school which they evolved strikes an entirely different note. The Mughal school 'confined itself to portraying the somewhat materialistic life of the Court, with its State functions, processions, hunting expeditions, and all the picturesque although barbaric pageantry of an affluent Oriental dynasty', while the Hindu artists, 'living mentally and bodily in another and more abstract environment, and working for Hindu patrons, pictured scenes from the Indian classics, domestic subjects and illustrations of the life and thought of their motherland and its creed'.

The Persian method of paintings, imported by the Mughals and thus assimilated by the Hindu craftsmen of India, was itself a provincialized form of Chinese art, owing its peculiar characteristics to the connexion with the Far Eastern schools established by the Mongols and continued by the Timurids. Its two greatest exponents in the period immediately preceding the introduction of the art to India were the famous Bihzad of Heart, who invented and developed real portraiture and has been styled the 'Raphael of the East', and his pupil Agr

Mirak of Tabriz. Bihzad, indeed, who enjoyed the favour of Sultan Hussain Baiqara and subsequently entered the service of Shah Ismail, founder of the Safavide dynasty of Persia, marks the transition of Persian painting from the Mongoloid style of the Timurid age to the more refined style associated with the Safavide rulers.[19] A well-known authority has remarked that the most striking feature of the painting of China and Japan is its line, of Persia its line and colour, and of India its colour.[20] These characteristics were assimilated, mingled, and combined in the products of the artists patronized by the Mughal rulers, resulting on the one hand in the gradual transformation of purely Muslim art, and on the other in a new development of Hindu pictorial representation. The process of decline of the purely Mongoloid or Chinese characteristics and the gradual evolution of the Indian style can be seen in the copy of the *Tarikh-i-Khandan-i-Timuria* and a copy of the *Badshah-nama*, both preserved in the Khuda Baksh Library at Patna. In the former the rigidity of the Chinese outline has been softened, and the scenery is distinctly Indian; while in the latter Chinese influence has disappeared altogether, and the Indian style predominates.[21]

Babur, although he could not draw or paint, was a born artist in his power of close observation and his intense interest in Nature. After nights of revelry he would stand in rapt contemplation before an apple-tree, admiring the exquisite colours of the autumn leaves, which no painter, however skilful, could depict. He is always keenly observant of the beauties of Nature,' writes Lane-Poole; 'he delights in the discovery of a spikenard, which he had not found before; and he is never weary of expatiating on the loveliness of the flowers in his favourite gardens. Dissipation never dulled his appreciation of

such delights, or his pleasure in poetry and music'.[22] It does not appear that he made any efforts to foster the art of painting in India; but the Alwar MS, of the Persian version of his *Memoirs* indicates that, like his Timurid ancestors, he had painters working under his patronage, and the illustrations in that manuscript may be assumed to represent the style of painting in vogue during his reign.[23] Humayun's chequered fate left him little opportunity for the encouragement of art in his Indian possessions, and any plans which he may have made in that direction were frustrated by his premature death. But the manner in which he passed the leisure hours of his exile in Persian, and subsequently in Kabul, proves that he shared to the full the family taste of the Timurids for art, and that like Babur he was an enthusiastic admirer of Nature. Besides visiting all the gardens of Khurasan, he acquainted himself with the music and poetry of Persia, and with the studios or schools of the leading artists who flourished at that date under the generous patronage of Shah Tahmasp. In this way he was brought into contact at Tabriz with Mir Sayyid Ali. a pupil of the renowned Bihzad, and Khwaja Abdus Samad, both of whom he persuaded to join his Court at Kabul in 1550. There he and his small son, Akbar. took lessons in drawing, and studied generally the art of painting under those two artists; there also he commissioned Mir Sayyid Ali to prepare the illustrations to the *Dastan-i-Amir Hamzah*, an immense task which lasted for years and required the collaboration of Khwaja Abdus Samad and other artists. Indeed. these two protégés of Humayun, working at Kabul with a few assistants. who may have hailed either from Persia or India, formed the nucleus of the Mughal school of painting, which came into prominence during Akbar's reign.[24] There can be little doubt that, in his patronage and encouragement of the painter's art, Akbar was giving practical effect to a policy which Humayun

would have carried out, had he been spared; and it seems likely that the tuition which he underwent at the instance of Humayun confirmed and increased the interest in painting which he inherited from his more remote forbears. To this extent Humayun may be considered the original founder of the Mughal school of painting.

For the first few years of his reign Akbar had little time to spare for the encouragement of art; he was mainly engaged in freeing himself form the tutelage of the *zenana* and the Uzbeg nobles of the Court and in consolidating his power. Meanwhile Mir Sayyid Ali continued to prepare his illustrations to the *Amir Hamzah*, until he set out on the pilgrimage to Mecca, when his work was transferred to Khwaja Abdus Samad, known at that date by the title of *Shirin-Kalam* or 'sweet pen', in allusion to his skill in calligraphy. At this date Persian influence was still predominant. the illustrations to the *Amir Hamzah* being very similar to the style of painting in vogue at Tabriz; but by 1562, when the well-known picture showing the arrival at the Mughal Court of the Hindu singer. Tansen, was painted, the destined fusion of the Mughal and Hindu styles had commenced to manifest itself.[25] A distinct step forward was taken when Akbar decided in 1569 to build Fathpur-Sikri and embellish it with masterpieces of the painter's art. He had already attached to his Court a small number of trained Persian artists, headed by Abdus Samad, who were quite ready to use anything good in the work of Indian artists, and also a considerable number of Hindu artists, trained specially in wall-decoration, who were willing to utilize their skill in the production of the class of painting required by the emperor. The result was the decoration between 1570 and 1585 of the walls of Akbar's new capital by the joint labours of Persian and Indian painters who though they may have carried out their work independently, were

yet mutually imbibing new ideas and facilitating the establishment of a regular school of Indo-Persian art.[26]

It is a remarkable fact that the majority of the artists who formed the imperial school of painting in Akbar's reign were Hindus.

The Mughal painters from 1526-1707

Reign	No. of artists	
	Hindu	Muslim
Babur (1526-30)	-	-
Humayun (1530-9; 1550-6)	-	-
Akbar (1556-1605)	145	115
Jahangir (1605-27)	43	41
Shah Jahan (1628-58)	17	18
Aurangzeb (1659-1707)	8	4
Total	213	184

Source : S.P.Verma, *Painting the Mughal Experience*, OUP, 2005, p. 35 (introduction)

The Persian or foreign painters, though they set the style, were comparatively few. They included Khwaja Abdus Samad, who was promoted to be master of the Mint in 1577, and subsequently became Diwan or Revenue Commissioner at Multan; Farrukh Beg, who was of Kalmuch origin and joined the Court in 1585; Khusrau Quli; Jamshed; and a group of five painters from Kashmir. Of the seventeen really pre-eminent artists of Akbar's reign, no less than thirteen were Hindus who excelled in portraiture – the distinctive feature of the Mughal school. The high standard of art which they achieved can be gauged from the statement of Abu-l Fazl that their pictures surpass our

conception of things. Few, indeed, in the whole world are found equal to them. Chief among them were Basawan, Lal, and Daswant of whom the last-named belonged to the Kahar or palanquin-bearer caste, and when at the height of his fame became insane and killed himself. Basawan excelled in the painting of backgrounds, the drawing of features, the distribution of colours, and portraiture. The other Hindu artists mention in the *Ain-i-Akbari*, such as Kesu, Mukund, Haribans, mostly belonged to the Kayastha, Chitera, Silavat and Khatri castes, and followed the practice of collaborating in each picture, in order to obtain the best results. The leading artist would sketch the composition, and each painter would then put in the part at which he was particularly expert. This system was followed in the illustration of the *Razm-nama* – a task primarily entrusted to Daswant, Basawn, and Lal, who delegated the painting of distinct portions of each separate picture to their fellow artists.[27]

Akbar undoubtedly shared with Babur and others of his race a deep sense of natural beauty. 'an intense appreciation of the wonder and glory of the world'; and it was this motive, rather than personal vanity or a desire for self-glorification, which led him to encourage the painter's art in defiance of strict Muhammadan orthodoxy.[28] He himself realized, however, that his more orthodox followers would expect some practical explanation of his reasons for disregarding the Quranic injunction regarding the representation of living forms; and he therefore took the opportunity, when many of them were present at a private party, of delivering the often-quoted opinion on painting, recorded by Abul Fazl. There are many that hate painting; but such men I dislike. It appears to me as if a painter had quite peculiar means of recognizing God; for a painter in sketching anything that has life, and in devising its limbs, one after the other, must come to feel that he cannot bestow individuality on his work,

and is thus forced to think of God, the Giver of life, and will thus increase his knowledge'. That this view was dictated by the need of allaying the apprehensions and objections of his Muhammadan *entourage* seems certain from the words used by his courtly biographer, in introducing the subject of the Emperor's support of the pictorial art. 'Bigoted followers of the letter of the law', he writes, 'are hostile to the art of painting, but their eyes now see the truth.

Having thus publicly announced his reasons for extending his patronage to painting, Akbar commenced the task of organizing an imperial school and stimulating the production of pictures with his accustomed zeal and grasp of detail. We learn from the *Ain-i-Akbari*[29] that the Emperor gave the art 'every encouragement, as he looks upon it as a means both of study and amusement'; that 'the works of all painters are weekly laid before. His Majesty by the *daroghas* and the clerks; he then confers rewards according to excellence of workmanship, or increases the monthly salaries'. In other words, the school was under the direct control and supervision of the Emperor, and the painters, who numbered more than a hundred and worked in a large hall at Fatehpur Sikri, were all granted military rank as *mansabdars* or *ahadis*, and drew their salaries according to their grade. Abdus Samad, for example, held the rank of a 'mansabdar of 400', though the influence which he enjoyed in the imperial circle was much greater than his grade warranted. In addition to the painters' section. the school contained a decorative section, staffed by 'ornamental artists, gilders, line-drawers and pagers', who were classed as infantry soldiers in accordance with the general military scheme of the imperial administration. The work of these craftsmen formed an essential part of the preparation of a Mughal painting or illuminated manuscript. The Emperor also turned his

attention to the improvement of the materials used in painting, ascertained and fixed the prices of such articles, and made improvements in the mixing of colours. "The pictures thus received", says Abu-l Fazl, "a hitherto unknown finish'. This technical branch of the school's activities were rendered necessary by the fact that the Emperor was introducing a new form of artistic expression, differing widely from that hitherto prevailing in India". No longer were artists to paint large scenes on the surface of walls in coarse *tempera* colours, which could be readily repainted when injured by the climate or the passage of time. Instead they were required to adapt this art to small pictures on paper, carefully and minutely drawn and coloured, which were to be a lasting record of each painter's individual skill. Special kinds of paper and pigments were therefore needed. brushes of suitable fineness to be prepared, and all the delicate mediums and adhesive obtained, which this decisive change of technique necessitated. Many of these commodities were little known in India, as for instance paper. which had only just begun to be used. This material, so essential to the art of painting, therefore had to be procured, and was first of all imported from Persia. Although afterwards paper manufactories were established in India by the Mughals. Under the Persian artists the preparation of pigments for miniature painting had received much attention, and these, or the formulae for them, were placed at the service of the Indian artists. The latter had their own palettes, but were ready to add to these any colours or mediums which would aid them in 'obtaining good results in this new form of pictorial art'.[30]

The artists of Akbar's Court specialized in portraiture and in book illustration, and some of them established a distinct superiority in the art of painting animals and birds. Akbar himself 'sat for his likeness, and also

ordered to have the likenesses taken of all the grandees of the realm. An immense album was thus formed; those that have passed away have received a new life, and those who are still alive have immortality promised them'.[31] Unfortunately few, if any, of the original portraits included in the Emperor's album have survived; but if the beautiful drawing of Umar Shaikh, the father of Babur, on a hunting expedition, which is how preserved in the British Museum, rightly belongs to the reign of Akbar, we obtain an idea of the delicacy and the felicitous blending of Persian and Indian art which must have characterized the portraits in the imperial collection. On the other hand, many examples of the book illustrations of Akbar's school have survived in the manuscripts preserved in England and India, the most notable of these being the *azm-nama* at Jaipur, which is said to have cost the equivalent of £40,000, the *Babur-nama in* the British Museum, and the *Akbar-nama* in the Victoria and Albert Museum. The *Babur-nama*, in which the illustrations are, perhaps naturally, rather more Persian than Indian in style, contain several paintings of animals, birds, trees, and so forth, some of which were the work of Mansur, who commenced his career under Akbar and attained fame in the reign of his successor, Another Hindu artist, who appears in this volume as the author of a small but exquisite picture of peacocks, is Jagannath – one of the pre-eminent painters mentioned by Abu-l Fazl. An analysis of the personnel of Akbar's school shows that the Emperor drew his court painters from a wide geographical radius. The Indians included artists from districts as far apart as Gujarat and the Punjab, while the foreign element was composed of natives of Kashmir, Persia, and Turkestan; and 'this artistic community, comprising many diverse races and several creeds which he had brought together, grew into a school, and flourished; it flourished because it was animated with one object,

which was to produce work of such a quality that it would earn the approval of the great mind responsible for its inception'.[32]

It is, however, questionable whether the school would have continued to flourish after Akbar's death, if it had not received the whole-hearted support and patronage of Jahangir. Art at this epoch was dependent for its existence upon the personal enthusiasm of the ruler; and it is to the eternal credit of Jahangir that he extended his powerful protection to the organization founded by Akbar, and by this constant encouragement of the Court painters promoted a steady improvement in the quality of the pictures which they produced, and brought to its maturity the special style of pictorial art associated with the dynasty of the Mughals. Jahangir has been described by a modern critic as belonging to 'the type of rich collector, perennial through the ages', voluptuously appreciative of fine workmanship, an excellent connoisseur, proud of the skill of his painters, and ready to pay heavy prices for any pictures that caught his fancy and satisfied his aesthetic standard.[33] He was certainly an accomplished critic of painting; for, as he himself informs us in his frank and outspoken *Memoirs*, he was very fond of pictures and had such discrimination in judging them, that he could tell the name of the artist, whether alive or dead. If there were similar portraits finished by several artists', he proceeds, 'I could point out the painter of each. Even if one portrait were finished by several painters, I could mention the names of those who had drawn the different portion of the single picture. In fact, I could declare without fail by whom the brow and by whom the eye-lashes were drawn, or if any one had touched up the portrait after it was drawn by the first painter'.[34]

Apart from his judgment as an art-critic, the estimate of Jahangir, mentioned above, scarcely does adequate justice to his passionate love of Nature. In his desire for travel and sports, in his love of self-indulgence, particularly with regard to wine, in his *camaraderie,* and in his literary activities, he closely resembled his great -grandfather Babur, though the latter was naturally more vigorous and led a much harder life. He resembled Babur still more closely in his love of gardens, flowers and scenery, in the profound joy which he felt in the presence of the world's beauty.' One remembers how Babur in his *Memoirs*, between the story of a night of love and wine, and the episode of a 'minaret of skulls', relates that he wept at the scent of a melon which reminded him of his country; in, the same way we find Jahangir so moved by ecstasy at the sight of the flowers and the meadows of Kashmir that he burst into song. His love of Kashmir, indeed, was so intense that he journeyed thirteen times during his reign; and whenever he saw a flower of tree or a natural scene that appealed to his aesthetic instinct, he bade his painters reproduce them. Jahangir had many failings; but he possessed an artist's vision, and so long as he lived, he was the soul and spirit of Mughal art.[35] Even in death he sought communion with nature, asking almost with his last breath that his tomb might lie open to the winds of heaven, and be watered by the rain and the dew. And peradventure Nature could have found no more fitting shrine for his remains than the fair garden at Lahore, in which he sleeps beneath an exquisite sarcophagus of white marble.

Before he ascended the throne, Jahangir had in his employ a celebrated painter of Heart named Aga Riza, to whom he refers in his *Memoirs*. Aga Riza's son, Abu-l Hasan, became one of the chief painters of Jahangir's Court, sharing the Emperor's patronage with Farrukh Beg, the Kalmuck artist, who

became leader of the school after the death of Abdus Samad; with Muhammad Nadir and Muhammad Murad, both natives of Samarkand, who seem to have been the last foreign artists at the Mughal Court; with Ustad Mansur, the leading animal painter; Bisandas, a skilled portrait painter; Manohar, and Govardhan. These men and others of less note were constantly attached to the Emperor's suite, and were commissioned to paint any incident or scene that struck the Emperor's fancy; and whether engaged in the work of portraiture or in the illustration of books, they were guided by the judgment and taste of the Emperor, who had acquired a first-hand acquaintance with the classical aspects of miniature painting. He sought also to educate their taste by the constant purchase of samples of the best schools of art. This combination of the Emperor's ideals with the craftsmen's skill resulted in the Mughal school of painting reaching the highest pitch of excellence and finally emancipating itself from the tutelage of Persia. The Persian influence, which counted for so much during Akbar's reign, was steadily assimilated during the reign of his son. Persian artists still lingered at Jahangir's Court, and one was employed by Shah Jahan; copies were still made by the Court artists from Persian pictures; but the true Persian style grew fainter and fainter and yielded place during Jahangir's reign to a type which was essentially Indian.[36] Thus an art which commenced by being the art of a foreign court, dependent on and directed by patronage, leaned gradually more and more to Hindu tradition, until its foreign or Persian features had been wholly assimilated. Akbar laid the foundations of Mughal miniature painting; but it was his son, Jahangir, born of a Rajput princess, who by his knowledge and artistic intuition guided the new school of Indian art to maturity, and taught it by the influence of his own rare judgment to achieve success.

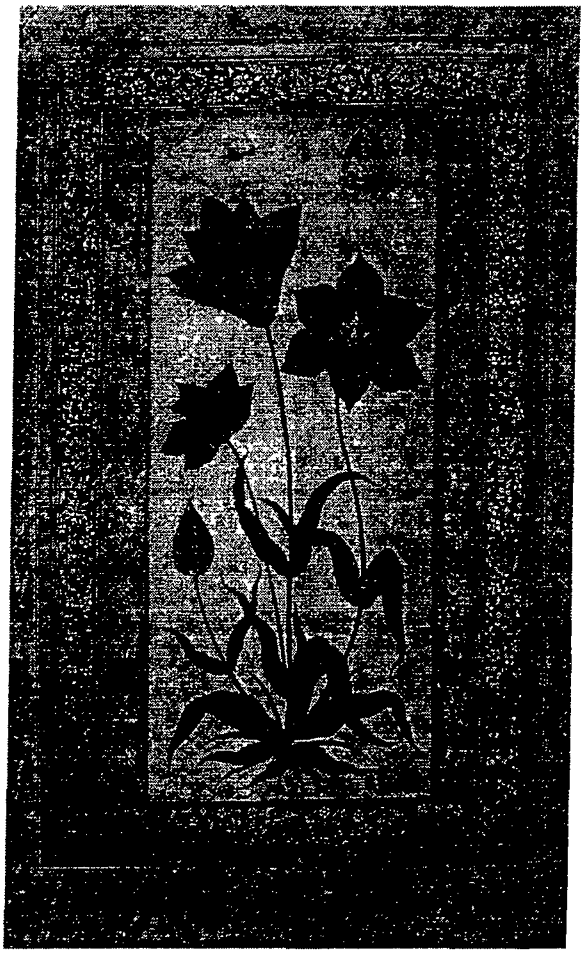


Fig 15 Kashmir tulip, by Mansur painter at Jahangir's court



Fig 16 Portrait of a Dying Man: Sketch of 'Inayat Khan, prepared at Jahangir's orders

The real spirit of Mughal painting, according to Mr. Percy Brown, died with Jahangir. Shah Jahan had not the same keen appreciation of pictures as his predecessors, and his personal tastes lay rather in the direction of architecture and jewellery. In consequence Mughal painting begun during his reign to show the first symptoms of decline. The pictures produced at that date depending for their attraction rather upon rich pigments and a lavish use of gold than upon the harmonious blend of colours distinguished the products of Jahangir's school. The circumstances of the artists themselves also underwent a change. Shah Jahan reduced the number of Court artists, keeping under his immediate patronage only a limited band of the most expert painters, and thus forced the large concourse of craftsmen, who had depended entirely on the ruler for livelihood, to seek the patronage at the Court grandees and nobility. The art ceased in fact to be an imperial monopoly though encouragement was still given to it by members of the imperial family, such as Dara Shikoh, whose album of paintings, now in the India Office, proves that he was a patron of the art. But all the painters who thronged the Court at the close of Jahangir's reign could not hope to obtain employment with the leading nobles, and those who failed to secure such patronage were forced to set up small studios in the bazaars of northern India and endeavour to earn a livelihood by selling their pictures to the general public. The public, however, which could appreciate and afford to purchase the artist's productions was very limited, and the status and prestige of those painters who did not enjoy the protection of the Court or the nobility gradually declined until they ranked little higher than artisans. Bernier describes this aspect of commercial art in the middle of the seventeenth century stating that the painters worked in halls in the cities under the eye of a master had no chance of attaining distinction and were inadequately remunerated for

their work. This system had barely commenced during the reign of Shah Jahan; but it unquestionably originated in that Emperor's restriction of his patronage to a small body of artists, and in the growing inability of the nobles to find the means to support a large body of trained artists in the style to which they had been accustomed in the golden age of Akbar and Jahangir. Potraiture and representations of the imperial *darbars* continued to be favourite subjects of the painter's art under Shah Jahan; brilliant colours and much gold are to be seen in the *darbar* of that Emperor preserved in the Bodleian Library at Oxford. In Mr. Percy Brown's words 'one detects behind all the lavish display which is the main characteristic of the painting under Shah Jahan, that sense of over-ripeness which is the sure sign of decline'.[37]

Aurangzeb, personally regarded painting with antipathy as an infringement of the injunctions of Islam. He is reported to have defaced many of the paintings in the Asar Mahal at Bijapur; and Manucci records that under his express orders the figures in Akbar's tomb at Sikandarah were covered with a coat of whitewash. Nevertheless the painters still practised their art during his reign, particularly those who were skilled in portraiture, and the number of paintings actually produced was certainly as large as the number produced under his predecessors. Many of these include a portrait of the emperor himself, and were therefore presumably painted with his sanction. They depict him hunting, traveling, reading, or commanding his army, as for example at the siege of Bijapur in 1686, which forms the subject of a painting preserved in the Rampur State Library. In one instance, referred to by Professor J.N. Sarkar, he actually made use of the painter's skill to provide himself with a record of the health of a rebellious son. During the incarceration of Muhammad Sultan, his portrait was painted at regular intervals by order of the Emperor and submitted to the latter for inspection. He thus kept himself informed of his son's

condition, without the necessity of visiting him or having him brought into his presence from the fortress of Gwalior.[38] But, speaking generally, despite considerable activity in the production of pictures, the art of painting showed distinct degeneration during Aurangzeb's, reign.



Fig. 17. Peasant listening to two sufic singers by the roadside. Paintıng by Bichitr, first half of the seventeenth century.

The paintings executed during the reigns of the early Mughal sovereigns have been justly praised by experts for their artistic qualities, and by historians for the valuable sidelight which they throw on the habits arid customs of the ruling classes of that epoch. They also form a valuable commentary on the daily life of the Emperors themselves. We see Babur receiving a deputation in a garden at Agra. Masons are seen at work on the walls and towers of

Fatehpur-Sikri. Akbar's elephant is depicted in a rage destroying a boat-bridge. The great Emperor himself can be seen hunting tigers and deer, or lying asleep under a rock. Jahangir is shown at the moment of killing a lion. Shah Jahan appears at one time visiting a religious teacher and at another enthroned amid splendours of the *Diwan-i-*Aam. Occasionally, one comes across scenes from *zenana* life, though these are rare in the best period of the art, and probably belong to the period of slow decay which commenced in the early years of Aurangzeb's reign and ended about the middle of the eighteenth century. The disintegration of the Empire necessarily involved the dispersal of the artists, who migrated from the capital to other centres like Oudh and Hyderabad, where new dynasties had declared their independence and appeared to offer fresh opportunities of employment. Some of the painters wandered eastwards to Patna: others sought the protection at Mysore, and there carried on the old traditions until the middle of the nineteenth century. But the art of painting never recovered its former spirit and excellence because of poor support it received during the period of decline was trivial, both in extend and quality, by comparison with the wealth and inspiration accorded to it by the masterminds of the Great Mughals.[39]

Notes and References

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3. Victomte Robert d'Humieres, *Through Isle and empire*, trans. Alexander Teixeriade Mattos, New York, Doubleday, 1905, p. 198.
4. J.N. Sarkar, *Studies in Mughal India*, Calcutta. p. 287.
5. *Babur-nama*, tr. A.S. Beveridge, vol. Ii, p.520.
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7. *Ain-i-Akbari*, tr. Blochmann, vol. 1, p. 85.
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9. Victomte Robert d'Humieres, *Through Isle and Empire*, pp. 199-200..
10. *Ibid.*. pp. 206-7.
11. James Fergusson, *History of India and Eastern Architecture*, London, 1876, p. 297.
12. W. Foster, *Early Travels in India*, p. 177.
13. V.A. Smith, *History of Fine Art,* p. 411; *IA*, 1927, vol. III, p. 118.
14. See Smith, *History of Fine Art*, pp. 416-18, for a discussion of the identity of the architect, and Moinu-d-din Ahmad, *The Taj and its Environments*, pp. 16-30, (2nd ed., Agra, 1924).
15. The fame of Taj mahal has overshadowed that of another and earlier tomb. also built by Shah Jahan, the beautiful mausoleum of his father at Shahdara, near Lahore. Though badly damaged in the days of Ranjit Singh it still remains an object of great beauty. As in the case of the Taj mahal, rumour has for many years ascribed much of the work to European agency, Jahangir's famous consort, Nur Jahan, lies buried

close by, in a mot unpretentious tomb, an indication perhaps of the comparative oblivion into which she fell after the death of her husband.

16. Victomte Robert d'Humieres, *Through Isle and Empire*, pp. 225-6.

17. Ebba, Koch, *Mughal Architecture,* p. 68. Mohammad, *Hammams in Medieval India*, *IC* 62 (October 1988), 37-56, 49.

18. *Tuzuk*, II, pp. 73-75; In 1616, six *bulghurkhana* were read, a further 24 were supposed to be built, *Tuzuk*, p. 205.

19. P. Brown, *Indian Painting under the Mughals.*

20. *Ibid.*

21. J.N. Sarkar, *Studies in Mughal India*, pp. 290, 291.

22. S. Lane-Poole, *Babar* (Rulers of India Series), p. 149.

23. L. Binyon. *Court Painters of the Grand Moguls*, Introd., p. 14.

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25. *Ibid.*. pp. 61, ff.

26. *Ibid.*. pp. 61 ff.

27. L. Binyon, *Court Painters of the Grand Moguls*, pp. 45, 46; P. Brown, *Ibid.*. pp. 120-3; Smith, *Akbar*, pp. 429, 430.

28. L. Binyon, *Court Painters of the Grand Moguls*, pp. 40, 41.

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31. *Ain-i-Akbari*. Vol. I, pp. 108-9.

32. P. Brown, pp. 123, 124.

33. L. Binyon, *Court of Painters of the Grand Moguls*, pp. 50 ff.

34. *Memoirs of Jahangir*, Rogers and Beveridge, 1909, vol. I, p. 20.

35. P. Brown, *p. 71*

36. L. Binyon, *Court Painters, B.C., passim;* P. Brown, *Indian Painting*, B.C.. passim. Three beautiful paintings of this period have recently been found in Jaipur – one is believed to be a portrait of the saint Salim Chishti in extreme old age.

37. P. Brown, p. 98.

38. J.N. Sarkar, *Studies in Mughal India*, p. 78.

39. See P. Brown, pp. 103-5.

CHAPTER 6

FINE ARTS

Calligraphy

Calligraphy or the art of beautiful writing was unique among the fine arts and had a sacred character with the Muslims. It was a pursuit of beauty and expression of thought as well as of aesthetic sense. This art of fine penmanship exercised a great influence on other fine arts, specially on painting. The calligraphers occupied a special position in society.[1] Calligraphy was regarded as an aristocratic art. Kings, princes and nobles practised it, and also took pride in it. Prince Khusrau and Sultan Parvez (sons of Jahangir), Emperor Shah Jahan and Prince Dara Shikoh were great masters of calligraphy. Calligraphy began with the *Kufic* style. It was so named because it was first officially used in *Kufa*. From the early times of Islam it was practised there. Gradually these *Kufic* forms were replaced by softer and rounder shapes. These shapes gave the impression of ornaments, and the European artists copied them as ornamental designs without a suspicion that they were writing. The *Kalima* inscribed in Arabic on the gate of St. Peters in Rome bears a testimony to this statement.[2] Calligraphy had seven styles. Muhammad Asghar who served both Humayun and Akbar was a famous calligrapher and poet. He could write in all the seven styles.[3]

In medieval India there was no printing press and hence printed books were not available. All books were manuscripts, written by hand. Sanskrit and Indian vernacular manuscripts were generally composed by ordinary scribes because the :Sanskrit alphabet does not easily lend itself to the calligraphic art,

and hence the Hindus had no calligrapher at their service to copy manuscripts. The Arabic alphabet, on the other hand, 'lends itself gracefully to the calligraphic art. Hence the Muslims developed calligraphy and employed calligraphers for copying manuscripts. Good handwriting was a necessity before the invention of printing. So painting and calligraphy were taught to the students in the houses of individual teachers.[4] Calligraphy as an art was considered superior to the art of painting. The calligrapher (*Khashnavis*) was a man of greater prestige than the painter (*naqqas*).

The art of calligraphy flourished in India from the beginning of the Muslim rule. Several buildings of the Sultanate period bear inscriptions of calligraphic value. Sultan Nasir-ud-din Mahmud and Muhammad-bin-Tughluq were themselves good calligraphers. The former used to copy the Quran himself. It was not however, until the advent of Mughal rule that the art of calligraphy attained its highest development in the country. The patronage of the Mughal Emperors who encouraged it both as a sisterly art to painting and for copying books of eminent authors, induced many Persian calligraphers to migrate to India. Calligraphy also formed an important factor in the training of princes. Hence many of the Emperors were themselves good calligraphers.

We hear little of calligraphy under Babur and Humayun. Babur, however. invented a new style of writing in 1504 A.D. known as the *Baburi Khat*. According to Mr. A.S. Beveridge, the Rampur manuscript of the *Babur-nama* dated 1530 A.D. may be in this Baburi style. Humayun himself was a good calligrapher.

Along with other arts, calligraphy received great encouragement and patronage from Emperor Akbar. His Majesty showed much regard to this art and took a great interest in the· different systems of writing. So a large number of calligraphers received encouragement from him. Famous calligraphers got honourable titles from the Emperor as recognition of their merit.[5] Abul Fazl speaks of eight modes of calligraphy being in vogue in Akbar's reign, of which the *nastaliq* was a special favourite of the Emperor himself.

Abul Fazl gives the names of the leading calligraphers at Akbar's court. The most famous of them was Muhammad Husain of Kashmir, who was conferred the title of *Zarrin-qalam* (or, the gold pen). His son Muhammad Ali who wrote as excellently as his father, had a special skill in the *Khat-i-jalli.*[6] Of the other renowned calligraphers of Akbar's time, Abul Fazl mentions Maulana Baqir, the son of the illustrious Mir Ali of Herat, Muhammad Amin of Mashtag, Mir Husain-i Kulanki, Maulana Abdul Haq, who was an expert in Baburi Khat, Maulana Dawri on whom Akbar conferred, the title of Katib-ul-Mulk and who, according to Badauni, was the best writer of *Nastaliq* in Hindustan, Maulana Abdur Rahim, Mir Abdulla, Nizami of Quzurin, Alichaman of Kashmir as well as Akbar's private secretary Ashraf Khan who improved the *Jaliq* very much. Inayatullah Shirzani who was a librarian in the Imperial Library was also a good penman.[7]

The art of penmanship grew as a sequel to the patronage offered by the Mughal Emperor to Persian prose and poetry which necessitated the works of the best authors to be written down with as much elegance and elaboration, as their quality demanded. The huge volumes of poetical works like Firdausi's

Shahnama, Nizami's *Khamsa*, Amir Khusrau's *Masnavi*, Jami's *Yusuf-u-Zulaikha*, Faizi's *Naldaman* and other simple poems were copied by scribes in elegant hand with profuse illustrations at Akbar's order.[8] Also sundry works on history and fables like the *Tarikh-i-Alfi*, the *Dastan-i-Amir Hamza*, the *Tarikh-i-Krishnaji*, the *Zafarnama* and the *Darabnama* were similarly written in a beautiful hand. Of the 12 to 15 thousand volumes of precious manuscripts in Akbar's library, a good many were caused to be re-written in elegant *naskh* and *nastaliq*. Similarly, of the four thousand volumes in Faizi's library, most of the manuscripts were contemporary productions on which, according' to Badauni, he spent a large sum of money from his *jagir*. The activities at the court of Mirza Abdur Rahim, who was a great patron of learning and a great penman himself and who possessed a good library, can easily be guessed. The Superintendent of his library Mulla Muhammad Kashan who was also a good penman was paid a monthly salary of Rs. 4000/-. Smaller works on romance and love and selected poems were often caused to be written in fine silky paper.

This process naturally led to the creation of a taste among the common people for beautiful handwriting which soon came to be regarded as a fine art and an essential part of a scholarly and cultured gentleman.[9] A good many instances can be quoted of poets and prose-writers who were also good calligraphers. Faizi, Badauni, Abul Fazl, Nishani and others, to quote only a few examples, were expert calligraphers. It is clear, therefore, that Akbar's inability to write himself did not prevent his giving every encouragement to the art of elegant penmanship as an aid to book production and propagation of education through books. Akbar's contemporary Ibrahim Adil Shah of Bijapur

was also a patron of the great calligrapher. Mir Khalilullah Shah who made a beautiful copy of the *Nau Ras* presented it to the king. Ibrahim Adil Shah bestowed on him the title of 'the king of the pen', and as a mark of special honour made him sit on the royal throne.[10]



Fig. 18. Mughal *Nash* by Ismat Allah



Fig. 19. Mughal *Shikastah* by Muhammad 'Ali

Emperor Jahangir was also a great lover of calligraphy. He was a great admirer of Mulla Mir Ali's calligraphy and in 1610 A.D. received from the Khan-i-Khanan, as an offering, a manuscript of Yusuf Zulaikha in the handwriting of Mulla Mir Ali with illustrations and in a beautiful gilt binding,

worth 1000 muhars.[11] A note by Shah Jahan refers to February 14, 1628, as the date of the receipt of the manuscript at the Imperial Library. Abdur Rahim was the famous calligrapher at the court of Jahangir on whom the Emperor conferred the double titles of *Anbarin Qalam* and *Roohan Qalam*. He took part in transcribing the manuscript of *Chihar Majlis*, a book on Sufism, by Ala-ud-daula Samnavi at Agra in 1611-12 A.D.

Shah Jahan himself was a good calligrapher and his reign was marked by a notable development of the calligraphic art. He very much admired the wonderful *nastaliq* of Mir Imadul Husain of Qazvin and took particular care to train his sons in calligraphy. Shah Jahan's court was adorned by a galaxy of noted masters of penmanship.

Aurangzeb's hobby of copying the Quran is well-known. He appointed Sayyid Ali, Jawahir Ragam as the instructor of his son and superintendent of his library. Aurangzeb himself acquired sufficient proficiency in penmanship. In his reign we find the development of the *shikasta* style side by side with the *nastaliq*. Aurangzeb learnt the *nastaliq* from Sayyid Ali and the *naskh* from Md. Arif. His sons also became excellent calligraphers. The author of the *Halat-i-Khushnawisan* writes that he saw illuminated copies of the Quran transcribed excellently by the princes. Muhammad Baqir was another calligrapher of Aurangzeb's reign, very much appreciated for his writing. Hidayatullah, *Zarrin Qalam* a pupil of Sayyid Ali, was also a court calligrapher of Aurangzeb. He was appointed Superintendent of the Imperial Library and instructor of the Emperor's sons. Another calligrapher of Aurangzeb was Abdullah whom he gave the title of Darayat Khan.[12]

Calligraphy continued to flourish under the later Mughals. Murad Khan, a specialist in the *shikasta* style and Mohammad Afzal were two noted calligraphers of the court of Muhammad Shah. Even the last Mughal Emperor Bahadur Shah II, could write several scripts with a special taste for the *naskh.* Like the Emperors and the princes many well-to-do persons also loved to copy books in a most attractive hand and to treasure them in their own private collections.

Calligraphy has long ceased to be recognised as a fine art, but before the invention of the printing press, it was, in fact, a qualification. A person who was found to be wanting in this qualification was considered to be wanting in scholarship itself. Letter-writing as well as penmanship as highly prized in Mughal India.[13]

Specimens of handwriting of the best calligraphers of this: age were preserved with utmost care in albums, some of which are existent even today. Calligraphy was so highly valued during the Mughal period, that it formed a special subject of study.[14]Manuscripts were sold and bought at very high prices, especially by those who had a keen desire to make self-improvement through reading and learning. Jahangir was one such lover of learning and he would purchase valuable manuscripts even at ridiculous prices.[15] A calligrapher and a painter were in those days, honoured equally.[16]

Sculptures

It goes to the credit of the Great Mughals that they emancipated this art from the orthodox restrictions against it, freed it from obsolete taboos and entirely secularized it, again like the contemporary art of painting. It developed

as Court (Darbari) art and. with the disappearance of the count patronage, into People's art, as is illustrated by the *guldasta panels* of the Tomb of Firuz Khan Khwajasara at Agra.

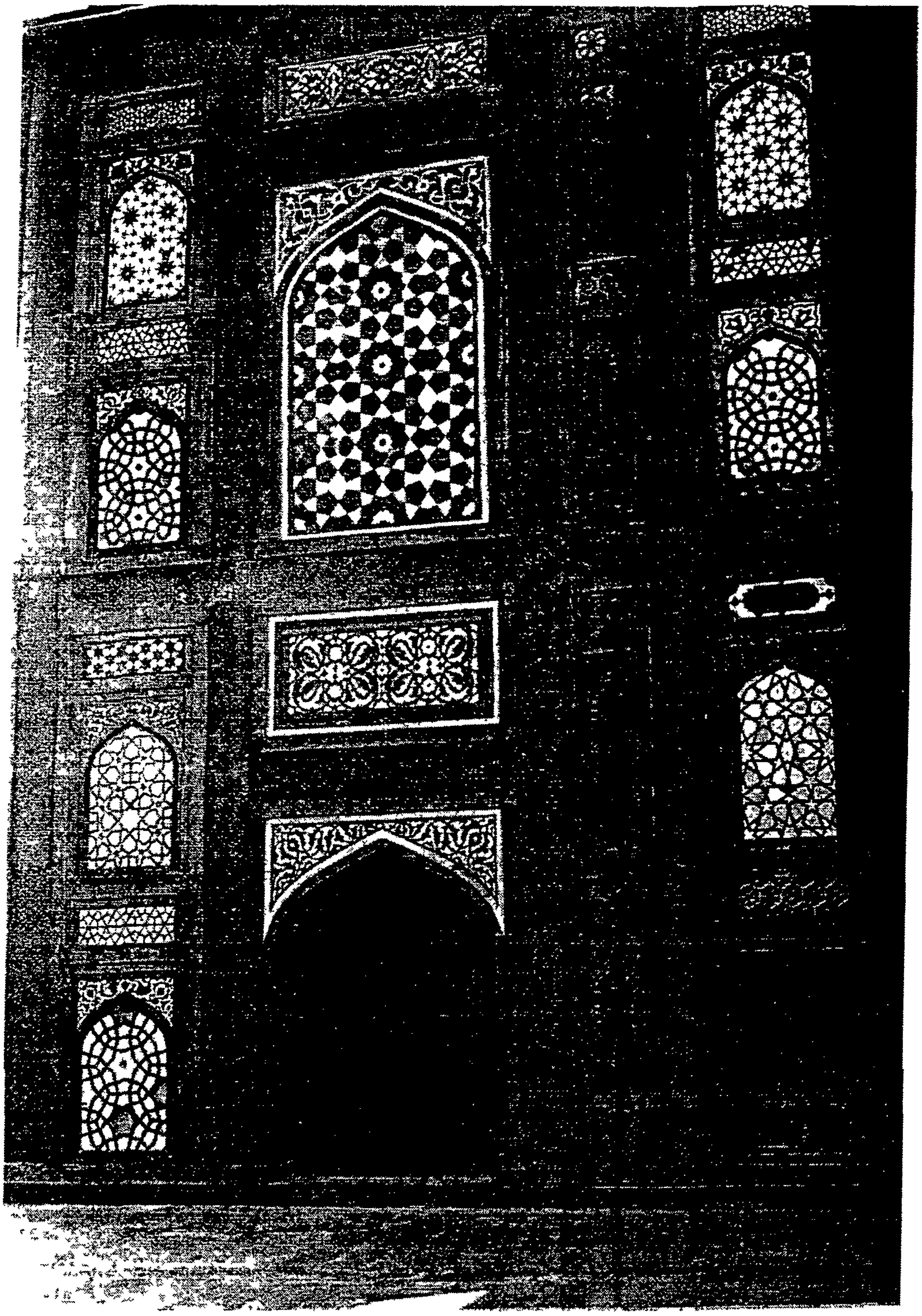


Fig..20. Guldasta and Wine-vase compositions with Birds, Western Gate of the Akbar Tomb

The age of Mughal sculpture ranges from Babur to Jahangir, roughly from 1526 to 1627 A.D. Some masterpieces were produced during the course of its development. Jahangirs reign (1605-27) was certainly the golden era of Mughal scripture, when overall emphasis was given on the making of full, round, free-standing scriptures.

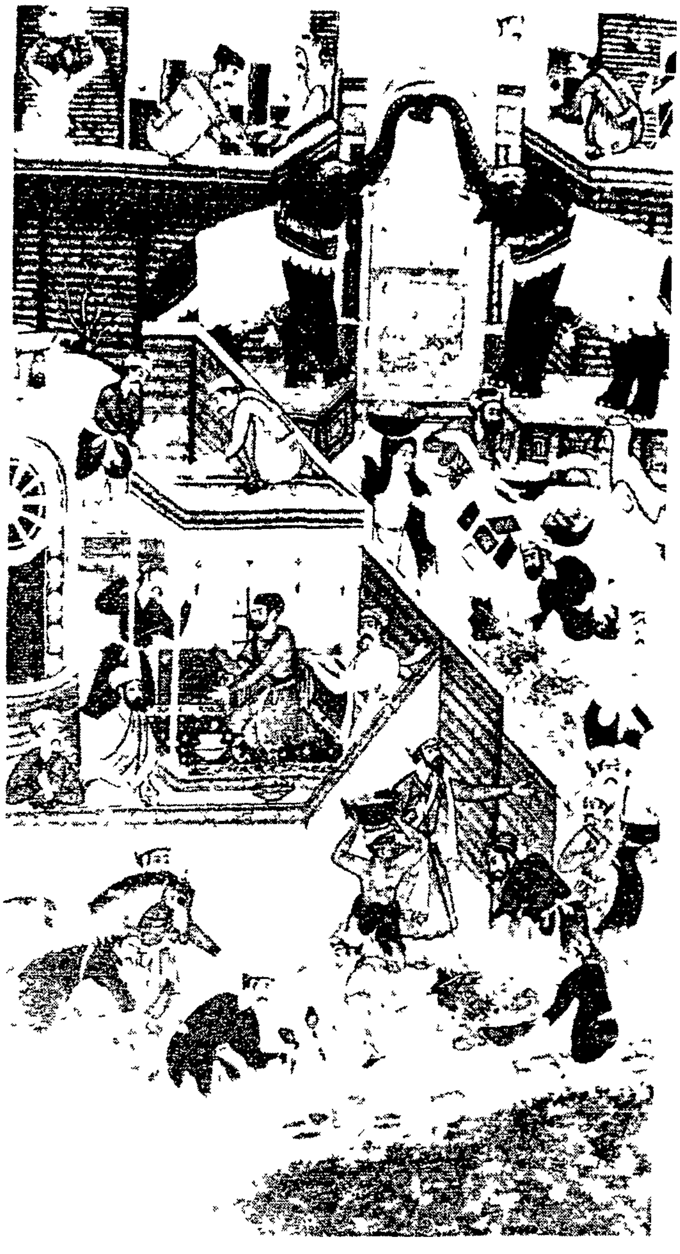


Fig. 21. Painting from the *Akbar Namah*, c. 1590 depicting the *Hathi Pol* of Fatehpur Sikri

William Finch, who visited Agra in the reign of Jahangir, speaks of the statues of 'two Rajas', created over one of the gates of that city by order of either Akbar or Jahangir.[17] These figures, which we remounted on elephants are. supposed to have represented two of the grandson of Raja Bhagwan Das of Jaipur, who were stain in a struggle with some of the nobles of the place, though possibly they were the statues of Jaimal and Patta, erected by Akbar. It is also certain that Jahangir commanded two life size marble statues of the Rana of Chitor and his son to be erected in the place garden at Agra, below the *darshanjhorokha*, at which he daily appeared before the eyes of his subjects.[18] Lastly we have the evidence of Bernier that in 1663, during the early years of Aurangzeb's reign, the Delhi Gate of Delhi remarkable for the statutes of two men mounted on elephants. who dislike of such effigies may have been aggravated by the fact that in all probability they were originally the handi work of Hindu scriptors.

Gardens

Gardens doubtless existed in India before the advent of the Mughals : Firuz Shah, indeed, is said to have planted twelve hundred gardens near Delhi at the end of the fourteenth century.[19] But these were probably *in* the old Hindu style. and bore little resemblance to the irrigated pleasaunces associated with the name of the Timurids. Babur, with vivid recollections of his motherland, Farghana. and its 'beautiful gardens of Ush, gay with violates, tulips, and roses in their seasons', laments in his *Memoirs* the lack of fair gardens in Hindustan; and Abu-l Fazl in a passage of his *Ain-i-Akbari* explains that prior to Babur's arrival the Indian garden was planned on no method and possessed no

pavilions nor murmuring fountains. The art of garden-building, which Babur brought with him to India and bequeathed to his successors, had been fully developed in Persia and Turkestan: its main characteristic was artificial irrigation in the form of channels, basins or tanks, and dwarf waterfalls, so built that the water brimmed to the level of the paths on either side; and the plan involved a series of terraces on sloping ground, usually numbering eight to correspond with the eight divisions of the Quranic Paradise, but sometimes seven. to symbolize the seven planets.[20] The main pavilion, which has been described as the climax of the garden, usually occupied the topmost terrace, giving wide views on all sides; but was sometimes built on the lowest terrace of all, in order to offer the occupant an uninterrupted vista of the fountains and waterfalls, ranging upwards through the garden. The ground-plan of the Persian and Mughal garden was a square or rectangle, divided into a series of smaller squares or parterres, the whole 'being encircled by a high wall with serrated battlements, pierced by a lofty gateway. The larger gardens were usually provided with four gateways, and small octagonal buildings marked the angles of the outer walls.[21]

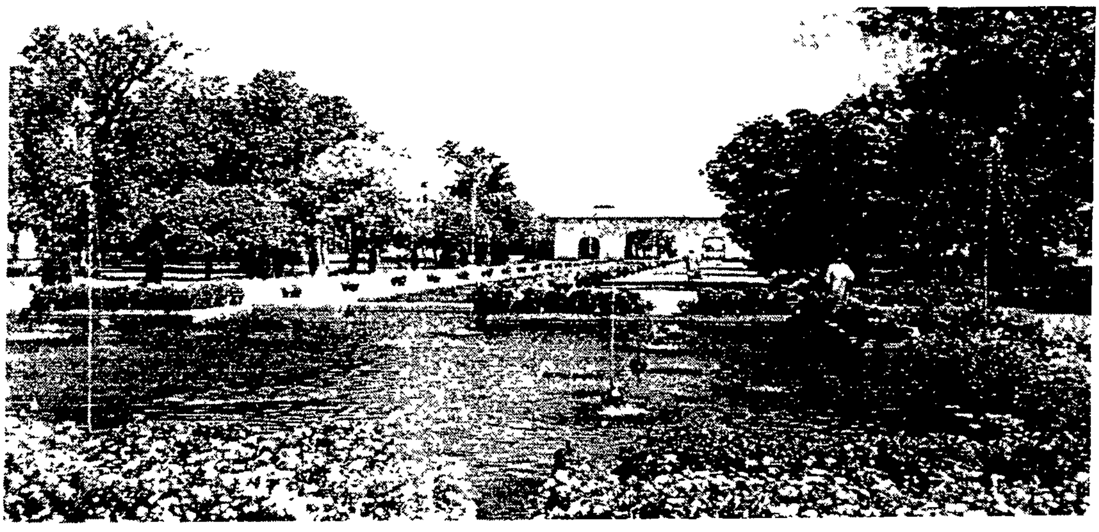


Fig 22. Shalamar Bagh, Lahore. The top terrace, formerly the zenana garden. The balcony of the pavilion at the end of the central canal overlooks the two lower terraces.

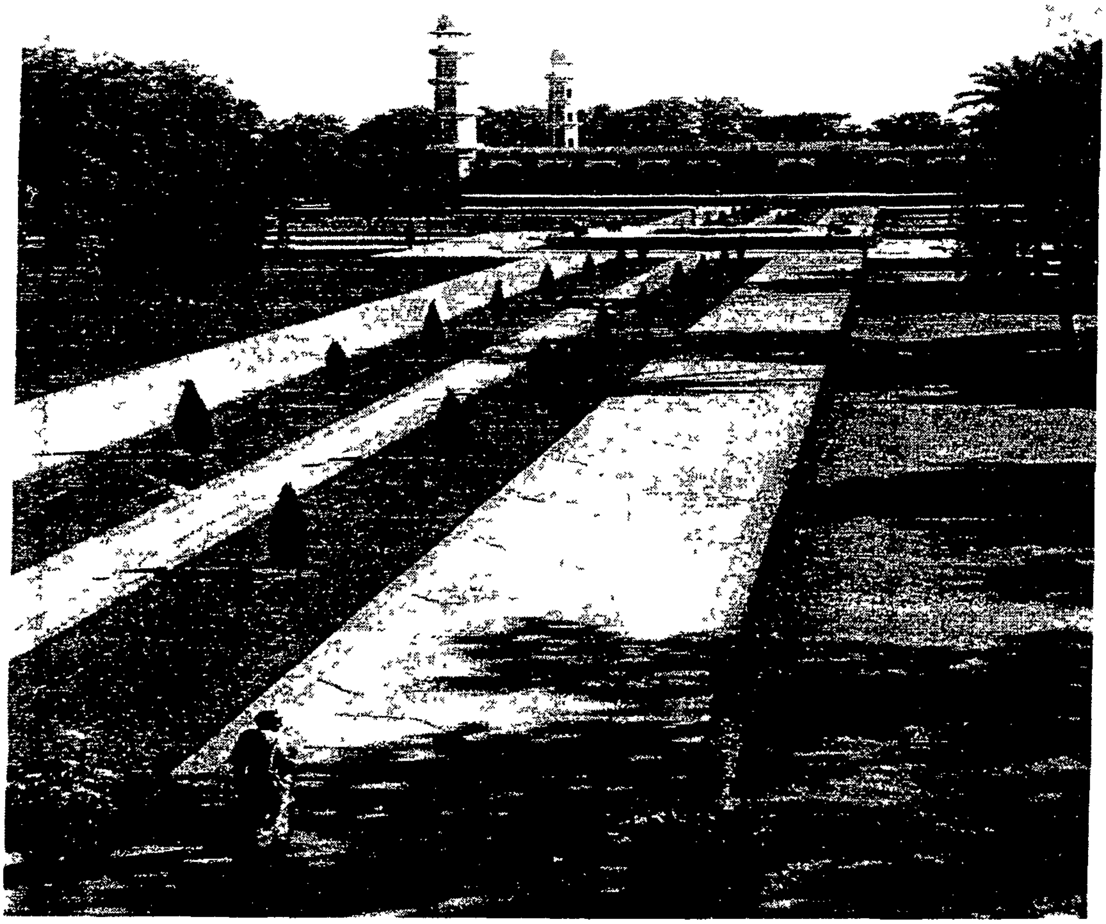


Fig 23. Shahdara, Lahore: Jahangir's tomb

The Mughal gardens path were generally raised above the flower-beds which bordered them, and the main squares or parterres were sunk below the level of the paths and their flower-borders, and were planted with fruit-trees, rose-bushes, and flowers of tall growth. Sometimes the separate squares composing the garden were each consecrated to a single kind of flower-tulip, rose, violet, etc. occasionally a whole garden 'was devoted to one special bloom.[22] After the Mughals had become firmly settled in the plains of India, the character of their gardens underwent a certain alteration. Sloping ground was not always to be found; the heat of India rendered a good supply of water vital for bodily coolness. Consequently, by the close of Akbar's reign, the main watercourse of the garden had been much increased in width sometimes to a

breadth .of twenty feet or more, as can be seen in the Shalamar Bagh built by Jahangir in Kashmir; a little later, the smaller canals were so widened as to require elaborate stepping-stones, which formed an integral feature of the design; and both the reservoirs and canals were furnished with fountains.[23] A typical Mughal garden of the plains, such as usually, formed the setting of the tombs and mausolea of princes of the imperial line and the nobility, was the garden of Akbar's tomb at Sikandarah. The groundplan is the original fourfold plot (*char-bagh*) adopted by Babur – a huge square enclosure laid out in the form of a Cosmic cross. In the middle stands the mausoleum, flanked by tanks with central fountains, supplying the narrow watercourses which once ran down the centre of the stone pathways. In many cases the channels and watercourses were paved with one ceramic ware, as at the Shalamar Bagh of Lahore. The cypress, the wild pine, the plane-tree and the areca-nut palm grew in the parterres that bordered the channels of the Sikandarah garden. In most of the gardens built by the nobels of the Mughal age the central *baradari* served as a summer-house during the owner's lifetime, and on his death became his mausoleum; and the garden was then devoted to religious purposes, its fruit and flowers being distributed to its custodians or to Fakirs and wayfarers.[24] The garden of the Taj Mahal is based on the same fourfold field plot, but differs from other tomb-gardens in having a beautiful marble tank in the centre of the plot instead of the tomb, which in this case stands at the end of the garden, overlooking the river.[25]

All the Mughal Emperors, Jahangir in particular, inherited a love of wandering and camping from their central Asian ancestors. Even Aurangzeb made a royal progress to Kashmir, though most of his tent-life, which lasted

for many years before his death, was due rather to military exigencies than to the *envie d'errer* which characterized his predecessors. Jahangir was 'the royal stroller *par excellecne*'[26] and time after time his love of Nature and the open country drove him and his Queen to Kashmir, where the Nishat, the Shalamar, the Achebal and the Vernag Gardens bear mute witness to his affection for the Happy Valley. Those pleasure-gardens 'climbing in superposed platforms the gently ascending hill which sends down upon them in successive falls the mass of its waters, reveal a whole aspect of the pensive, sensuous, pastoral soul of Islam. At the other end of its empire, under the western horn of the crescent, another garden, that of the Alhambra, preserves the fame of one of the most seductive spots on earth. Both are halting places of the Believer, palaces or tombs. retreats of voluptuousness or death, flowering limits placed by ironical fate to mark the will of man and the glory of God'.[27] European travellers of the seventeenth century were not slow to recognize the spell of these imperial gardens. Edward Terry (1616-19) remarked the 'curious gardens, planted with fruitful trees and delightfull flowers, to which Nature daily lends such a supply as that they seem never to fade. In these places they have pleasant fountaynes to bathe in and other delights by sundries conveyances of water, whose silent murmure helps to lay their senses with the bonds of sleepe in the hot seasons of the day'.[28] Bernier in 1665 gave a graphic descrption of the Shalamar Gardens of Kashmir, in the summer-tide of their beauty, and spoke with admiration of the pavilions, of which the black marble pillars alone now remain. Yet even now. in the twilight of its glory, with 'its masses of purple rock seamed with snow, the light green foliage of the plane-trees, the shrubs and lilac blossoms'[29], the Shalamar Bagh is a pleasant place wherein to dream of the

glory of its founder and the Empress Nur Jahan.

Many passages in Babur's famous *Memoirs* portray his close observation and keen interest in Nature, and show that his rude temperament yielded to the subtle influence of flowers.[30] He laid out and improved many of the gardens round Kabul, like the *Bagh-i-Kilan* and the *Bagh-i-Vafa* or 'Garden of Fidelity'. The latter and 'the Fountain of the Three Friends' were two of his favourite retreats; and he describes the garden as laid out on an elevated sites, overlooking the river and watered by a parennial stream. There he planted sugar-cane and plantains, and orange-trees around the reservoir in the south-western corner. The ground round the latter – 'the very eye of the beauty of the garden' – was a mass of clover.[31] After fixing on Agra as his capital he commenced to lay out the Aram Bagh on the banks of the Jumna – the earliest Mughal garden still existing in India which was chosen later by the Empress Nur Jahan as one of her favourite country retreats. In it he built reservoirs, baths, and private pavilions, and sowed the beds with roses and narcissi. Babur's pavilions, and sowed the beds with roses and narcissi, Babur's historical taste and knowledge must have been considerable; for, according to Jahangir's *Memoirs*, an avenue of areca-nut palms, which he planted in one of the Agra gardens, had reached a height of 90 feet in the time of his great grandson, while in another garden, which he named the 'Flower-scatterer', he obtained hundreds of pine-apples every year and feasted his eyes on a wealth of red-blossomed oleanders, which he had transplanted from Gwalior. Elsewhere he speaks of getting fine grapes from the vines which he planted in

his 'Garden of Eight Paradises'. The other principal garden laid out during Babur's reign was the Zuhara Bagh, a walled enclosure watered by sixty wells, which lay between the Ram Bagh and the Chini-ka-Rauza, and belonged to one of the Emperor's daughters: but several of Babur's courtiers and nobles, spurred by his example, built elegant gardens an reservoirs on the banks of the river at Agra.[32]

To Humayun's brief reign belongs the garden to round his tomb at Delhi, which still preserves intact its original plan. The fruit and shade-giving trees have vanished. but the restoration in late years of the stone channels and the fountain-basins enables one to realize the character of this early Mughal pleasaunce. Akbar inherited his grandfather's love of horticulture. 'His Majesty', writes Abu-l Fazl, 'looks upon plants as one of the greatest gifts of the Creator and pays much attention to them. Horticulturists of Iran and Turan have therefore settled here. and the cultivation of trees is in a flourishing state'. Though less passionately attached to gardens than Jahangir and Shah Jahan, he built 'paradises' at Fathpur Sikri and Sikandrah and also planned the Nisim Bagh. the first Mughal garden in Kashmir, on the shores of the Dal.

Before he succeeded to the throne, Jahangir had indulged his passion for gardens by laying out several at Udaipur. The origin of the patterns of the Persian floral carpets can be traced in the flower-beds of these Udaipur gardens. which were worked out in bricks covered with fine polished plaster.[33] He describes in his *Memoirs* another which he built at Sarhind, containing a rose bordered avenue. flanked on either side by evergreens, cypresses and plane-trees, which led to a parterre of 'the choicest and most variegated

flowers'. One of his gardens at Ahmadabad contained orange, lemon, peach, pomegranate, and apple-trees, and 'among flowering shrubs, every kind of rose'. Two of the most noteworthy gardens in India, constructed during his reign, were the tomb-garden of Itimadu-d daula at Agra, and the Shahdara, Nur Jahan's 'Garden of Delight', five miles from Lahore, which is built on much the same plan as the garden at Sikandarah and contains a series of raised fountain-tanks, forming eight large *chabutras* round the mausoleum. It was here that the Emperor Jahangir was buried, despite his dying request to be carried back to the Vernag Bagh in Kashmir-the favourite resort if himself and the Empress, which bears upon the wall of its reservoir his own inscription, 'The King raised this building to the skies: the angel Gabriel gave its date 1609'.[34]

If we except the garden of the Taj Mahal, the Shalamal garden at Lahore, which was commenced in 1634 under the supervision of Ali Mardan Khan, is probably the best-known of the gardens built by Shah Jahan. It consists of two *char-baghs,* joined by a narrower terrace, which carries at its central point a large raised reservoir. On either side of the reservoir are pavilions, and the whole circumference is laid out in flower-beds. Another Shalamar Bagh was built at Delhi by Azu-n nissa, one of Shah Jahan's wives, and was described by an English officer in 1793 as laid out with admirable taste. It was in this garden that Aurangzeb was first crowned, after the deposition of his father; it was here that he made his first halt on his journey to Lahore and Kashmir in 1664.[35] Both the palaces at Delhi and Agra contained gardens. In the former the two principal retreats were the 'Life-giving garden' and the 'Moon garden'; but connected with the women's apartments were

smaller gardens, one of which is glorified by an inscription on the wall of the Khwabgah:

> Like a lamp in an assembly, and this clear canal, whose limpid water is as a mirror for every creature that sees and, for the sage, unveils the mystic world, and these cascades, ach of which, one light say, is the whiteness of the morning or else a tablet stolen from the secrets of fate'.[36]

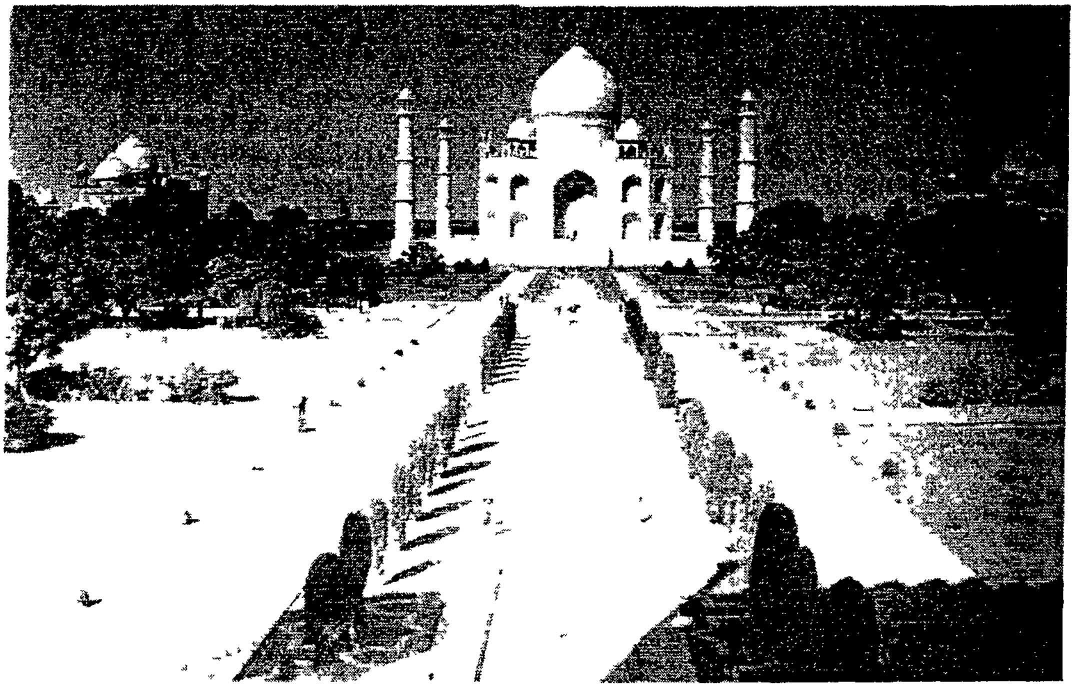


Fig 24. From the first floor of the entrance gateway. The red sandstone bilding to the left of the Taj is a mosque, Distinguished pilgrims were made welcome in the building on the right.

The Palace at Agra enshrined the Anguri Bagh or Grape garden, in front of the Khas Mahal – a typical old Mughal garden laid out in geometrical stone-edged parterres, with four terraced walks radiating from a central *chabutra*, with a raised fountain tank. It must have been from some such scheme of flower-beds as still exists in outline in this garden that the craftsmen obtained the design of the old Firdous ('Paradise') carpets.[37] Other gardens dating from Shah Jahan's reign were the Talkatora Bagh near Delhi, in which the whole

terrace at one end formed a roof-garden, and the garden of the unfortunate Dara Shikoh at Kashmir, now styled the Vazir Bagh.

Aurangzeb denied himself many pleasures naturally belonging to humanity, and the passion for gardens and flowers, which distinguished his predecessors, died at the chill touch of his rigid orthodoxy. Such a thought as that which Jahangir once expressed regarding a perfume - 'it restores hearts that have gone and brings back withered souls' - could never have occurred to Aurangzeb, who wore the plainest clothes, declined to use vessels of silver and gold, and devoted all his leisure thoughts to religion. Nevertheless, the art of garden-building was not wholly in abeyance during his reign. A fair garden was built round the Badshahi mosque at Lahore; the Emperor's foster-brother, Fadai Khan, built a fine garden at Pinjor (Panchpura), which lies off the road from Ambala to Simla; the Emperor's daughter, Zebu-n nissa, laid out the well-known Char Burji garden in Lahore; and Roshanara Begam lies buried in the white pavilion with creeper-clad walls, which stands on the upper terrace of the pleasaunce that still bears her name. This garden was entered by the usual Mughal gateway, which was linked with the tomb of the princess by a raised canal, bordered by beds of flowers and pricked with a row of small fountains.[38] Time has dealt hardly with the gardens or the Mughal age, and many of those built by the nobility in the reign of Akbar, Jahangir, and Shah Jahan have vanished entirely. But enough remains of the principal tomb-gardens and 'paradises', as the old English monks styled such retreats, to suggest that their former attractiveness may well have deserved the eulogy inscribed upon the gate of the Shalamar Bagh at Lahore:

Sweet is this garden, through envy of which the tulip is spotted;

The rose of the sun and moon forms its beautiful lamp.

Jewellery

The arts of the lapidary and the jeweller benefited from the love of jewels and precious stones which characterized the Mughal Emperors at all times. It was Humayun who first acquired the famous *Koh-i-nur* diamond from the family of Raja Bikramajit, which, after remaining in Persia, with Shah Tahmasp during Humayun's exile, is supposed to have eventually found its way into the treasury of Aurangzeb, as a present from Mir Jumla. Akbar at his death left behind him 'fully forty million pounds sterling in coined money, equivalent in purchasing power to at *least* two hundred millions now'[39], and an enormous collection of jewels, which he valued highly. Among the latter were a large number of specially fine rubies, which were made into two rosaries. valued at ten lacs of rupees a piece; and many of the fine gems which appear in the list of Jahangir's personal possessions, recorded by William Hawkins (1608-13), as well as some of those which were used in the decoration of the famous Peacock Throne, were originally collected by Akbar. Jahangir's jewels included one and a half maunds of unset diamonds, twelve maunds of pearls, two maunds of rubies, five maunds of emeralds, one maund of jade, besides jeweled sword-hilts, poniards, drums, brooches, aigrettes, saddles, lances, chairs of state, flagons, wine-cups, charms and rings.[40] In Shah Jahan the taste for jewels developed into a passion. His personal jewellery was worth five crores of rupees, besides two crores' worth presented to the imperial princes and others. The jewellery which he ordinarily wore was valued at two crores and was kept in the harem in charge of female servants, while the remaining three crores' worth was in the custody of slaves in the

outer apartments. The *sarpech* or aigrette of large rubies which he wore in his turban was estimated to be worth twelve lacs.[41]

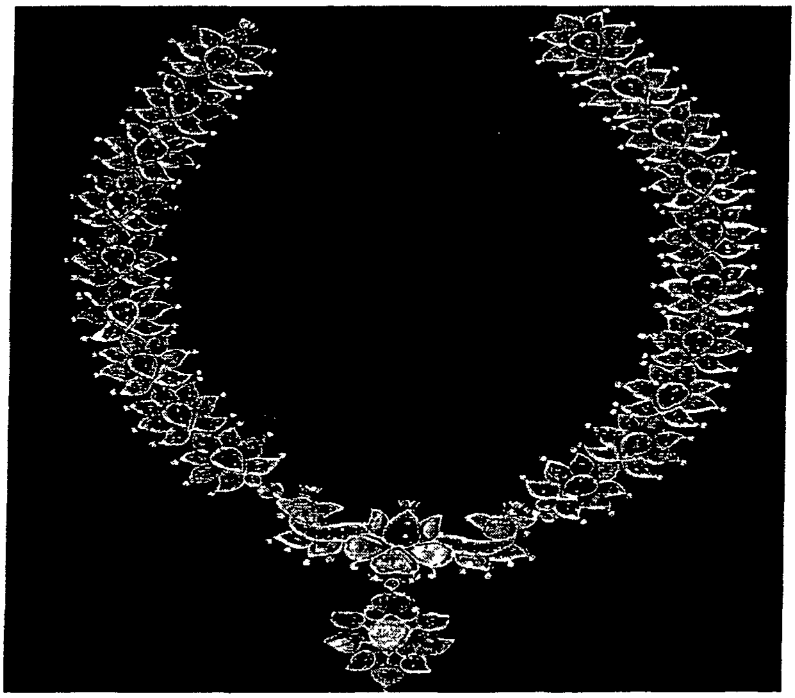


Fig. 25. Gold and enamel necklace, set with rubies, diamonds and emeralds, c. 1620-40

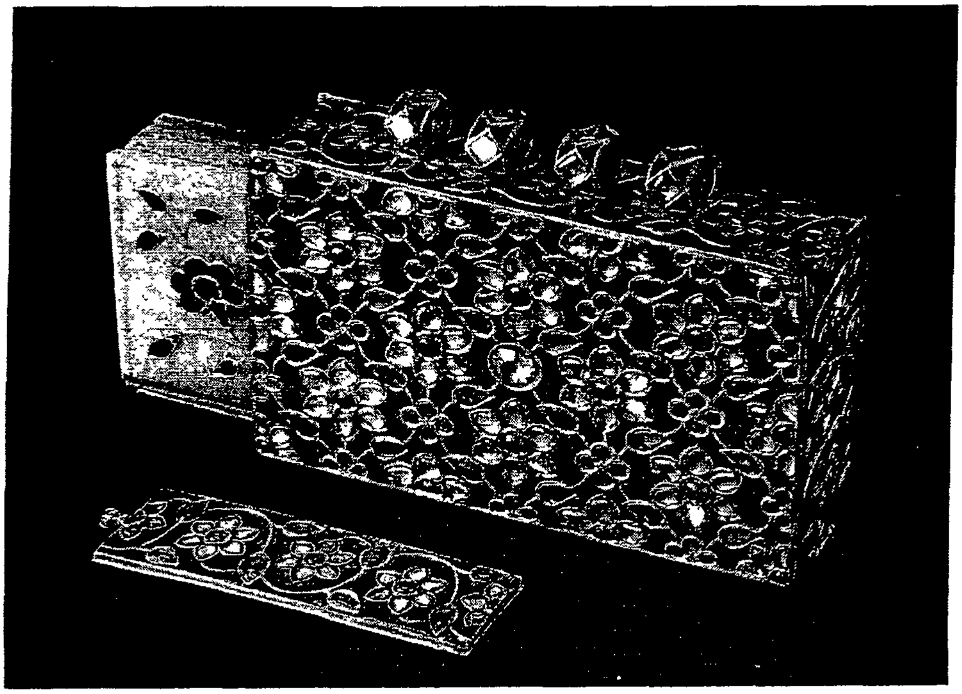


Fig. 26. Miniature illuminated manuscript of the Qur'an, bound in nephrite jade, inlaid with gold, set with rubies and emeralds,

dated AH 1075 (1674-5), with gold and enamel pendant case set with diamonds, rubies and emeralds (case probably late 17th century)

The crowning example of the union of the jeweller's art with the Mughal love of display was the famous Peacock Throne of Shah Jahan, which was valued by a contemporary French jeweller at 150 million francs, and the materials of which, apart from the wages of the craftsmen employed on it, cost a crore of rupees. The throne was made of pure gold, studded with gems valued at sixteen *lacs* of rupees; the inner roof was enameled, the outer covered with rubies and other jewels; twelve pillars of emerald supported the roof, which was surmounted by the figures of two peacocks, ablaze with precious stones. Between the peacocks was. a tree set with diamonds, rubies, emeralds and pearls; three jewelled steps led to the Emperor's seat, which was surrounded with eleven jewelled panels, of which the middlemost bore as its central gem a splendid ruby presented by Shah Abbas I to Jahangir.[42] In the midst of these splendours the Emperor, clad in white garments covered with priceless gems, appeared as we see him in the old Mughal miniatures, 'his forehead girt with a scarcely imaginary halo, holding a flower to his nostrils'. One has only to read Bernier's description of Aurangzeb's durbar in 1663 to see that the son of Shah Jahan was not prevented by his austere orthodoxy from indulging an inherited taste for barbaric ostentation, at any rate during the first few years of his reign. 'The king', he writes, 'appeared seated upon his throne, at the end of the great hall, in the most magnificent attire. His vest was of white and delicately flowered satin, with a silk and gold embroidery of the first texture. The turban, of gold cloth, had an aigrette-whose base was composed of diamonds 'of an extraordinary size and value, besides an oriental topaz, which may be

pronounced unparalleled, exhibiting a luster like the sun. A necklace of immense pearls, suspended from his neck, reached to the stomach, in the same manner as many of the Gentiles wear their string of beads. The throne was supported by six massy feet, said to be of solid gold, sprinkled over with rubies, emeralds and diamonds'.[43]

Beautiful vessels and cups of jade were collected by Jahangir, Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb, when seated on his throne, 'had brought to him upon a golden saucer, enriched with diamonds, rubies and emeralds, a large cup of rock crystal, all around and smooth, with the same decoration as the saucer'[44]; some fine cups of rock crystal, found in the Delhi Palace in 1857, perhaps date *back to the age of the Great Mughals.*

Music and Singing

When Mughal came to power we find a mixed Indo-Muslim system of music and singing. With the exception of Aurangzeb, the Mughal emperors were fond of music and gave encouragement to the art, which at an earlier date had been improved and developed by the famous Amir Khusru. During his sojourn at the Court of Sultan Ghiyasu-d din Balban (1266-86) he had leisure to revise the musical modes originally introduced from central Asia, and thus incidentally influenced the gradual transformation of the character of Hindu music, which in its later form differed little from the Persian *ghazal*. The Mughal Emperors were not alone in their appreciation of music; for it was cultivated by several Indian rulers, including the Adil Shahi Sultans of Bijapur and Baz Bahadur of Malwa, who was a contemporary of Akbar. Babur is said to have been skilled in the art and to have written a treatise upon it[45]; and although no definite evidence of Humayun's attitude towards music survives, it

is probable that he shared the family taste for song and dance. Akbar's courtly biographer leaves us in no doubt regarding his patron's devotion to the art, declaring that the Emperor 'pays much attention to music, and is the patron of all who practise this enchanting art. There are numerous musicians at court, Hindus, Iranis, Turanis, Kashmiris, both men and women. The court musicians are arranged in seven divisions, one for each day of the week'.[46] Akbar's interest in music was not merely that of a cultured listener. He had acquired, according to Abu-l Fazl, such a knowledge of the science of music as trained musicians do not possess'; he was no mean performer on the *nakkarah* (kettle-drum): he made a special study of Hindu vocalization under Lal Kalawant, who taught him 'every breathing and sound that appertains to the Hindu language'[47]; he himself harmonized two hundred old Persian tunes. As a result of Akbar's encouragement of the art, music enjoyed great popularity, and the vocal side of it, with its *rags* and *raginis*, was widely cultivated. Throughout the country the nobility and the wealthy classes emulated the ruler's zeal and exerted themselves to improve the art: skilful singers were often rewarded with costly presents, as for example Ram Das, who received a lac of rupees from Abdur Rahim Mirza, Khan-i-Khanan[48], and the famous Mian Tansen, to whom Akbar presented a reward of two lacs of rupees. The chief instruments used at this date in instrumental music or to accompany the voice were the *sarmandal, bin* (veena), *nai, karana, tamburah, gbichak, qubuz, surna,* and *qanun.*

Abu-l Fazl gives a list of thirty-six singers and instrumental performers at Akbar's Court, including Baz Bahadur, mentioned above, who was appointed a '*mansabdar* of 1,000 and is said to have been an unrivalled singer. But by far the most skilful and famous vocalist of the day was Mian Tansen Kalavant, who was originally in the service of the Raja of Rewa and had

commenced his professional career in the school of music founded at Gwalior by Raja Man Singh (1486-1518).[49] Akbar compelled the Raja of Rewa to surrender Tansen in 1562-3; and the first arrival of the signer at the imperial Court has been immortalized by a painting now preserved in the Indian Museum at Calcutta, which, apart from its historical interest, is a valuable example of the transition of the pictorial art from the Persian to the Mughal style and shows in a marked manner the incipient fusion of the former with the indigenous art of Hindustan.[50] Several tales have been woven by the popular imagination to glorify Tansen's musical abilities. He is said to have spent much time listening to the simple melodies of the peasants, as they drew water from their field-wells, and to have adapted these to his more finished vocal art; he is credited with the power of stopping the flow of the Jumna by his singing, just as his rival, Birja Baula, is believed to have split a rock with a single powerful note. Birja Baula who is supposed to have learnt his bass from the noise of the stone grinding-mills, is not mentioned by Abu-l Fazl in his list of eminent musicians, but the story of his rivalry with Tansen is attested by many a legend and folk-tale.[51] It is said that Hindu critics of the musical arts hold Tansen responsible for the deterioration of Hindu music, declaring that he falsified the *rags*, of which two, *bindol* and *Megh*, have disappeared completely since his day.[52] Be this as it may, he achieved an unrivalled reputation, and seems to have fully justified Abu-l Fazl's remark that 'a singer like him has not been in India for the last thousand years'.

It seems probable that Tansen was a native of Gwalior, which appears to have been prolific of singers and musicians in the Mughal age, and that shortly after joining Akbar's' service, he became a Musalman and was granted the title of Mirza. He died in April 1589, and was buried at Gwalior, close to the south-

west corner of the sepulchre of Muhammad Ghaus - a position which indirectly proves his conversion to Islam, as no Hindu could have been buried in such a spot. According to Forbes, Tansen's death actually took place in Lahore, his body being removed to Gwalior *by* the express command of Akbar[53], in whose name. it may be added, most of his musical compositions were written. By an artistic anachronism, Tansen appears in a picture of a procession at the Court of Jahangir, painted by Manohar in 1605, which has led to the erroneous statement that Tansen lived to see service under Jahangir as well as under Akbar.[54] There is no doubt whatever that Tansen was not alive when Jahangir came to the throne, having died in the thirty fourth year of Akbar's reign. On the other hand, there was nothing to prevent one of Jahangir's Court artists introducing into a scene at his patron's Court the portrait of a renowned singer, whose features had often been reproduced during his lifetime. The fame of Tansen is not doomed to fade: 'His melodies', as Blochmann writes, 'are even nowadays everywhere repeated by the people of Hindustan'[55]; his tomb at Gwalior has become a place of pilgrimage for those who adopt music as a profession; and a measure of the harmony which he once evoked still dwells in the leaves of the *nim* tree overshowing his grave, which are believed, when eaten. to improve the human voice.

His father's taste for music was apparently inherited by Jahangir, who maintained several good singers at his Court. The *Iqbal Nama-i-Jahangiri* recorded the names of six specialists in the art[56]; and William Finch, in his description of Agra. indicates that Akbar's practice of allotting a separate day of the week for each band of singers was observed during Jahangir's reign. 'Many hundreds [*scil*, singing and dancing girls]', he writes, attend there day and night, according as their several turns come every seventh day, that they

may be ready when the King or his women shall please to call any of them to sing or dance in his moholl, he giving to every one of them stipends according to their unworthy worth'.[57] Vocal and instrumental music was the chief feature of these entertainments and seems to have been of high order of merit for Tavernier the tarveller, who spent sometime in India at this date, declares that the music played at these imperial receptions was sweet and pleasant, making so little noise that it did not disturb the thoughts from the serious business in which the courtiers were engaged. Occasionally the Emperor himself took part in the performance; for. according to the court chronicler, he was an accomplished vocalist and had so attractive a voice that 'many pure-souled *Sufis* and holy men with hearts withdrawn from the world, who attended these evening assemblies, lost their senses in the ecstasy produced by his singing'.[58] After allowing for Oriental hyperbole, it may be assumed that Shah Jahan had a fine voice and had studied the art of music with as much care as his grandfather. Akbar. Like his predecesors he was a patron of singers, two of the chief vocalists at his court being Ram Das and Mahapattar; and on one occasion he was so delighted with the performance of a *mastro* named Jagannath, that he had him weighed against gold and gave him the amount as his fee.[59]

With the accession of Aurangzeb, music fell upon evil days. Apart from the active encouragement given to it by the earlier Mughal Emperors, music had always been popular with all classes, as the Rev. Edward Terry noticed during his comparatively' brief visit to India.[60] Consequently it must have been with feelings of amazement and dissatisfaction that they learned of the emperor's orders prohibiting music and that he had actually created a new department for the express purpose of reducing the number of professional

musicians. The officials of the department did their work only too well. According to Manucci, they entered any house or place whence the sound of music and singing was audible and broke the instruments of the performers,



Fig 27. Kalawant Tansen (?) Late 1580s.

and they generally made matters so unpleasant for the singers and their audience that the professional musicians found themselves in danger of losing their livelihood. The latter determined to try and persuade the Emperor to rescind his order. 'About one thousand of them', write Manucci, 'assembled on a Friday when Aurangzeb was going to the mosque. They came out with over twenty highly-ornamented biers, as is the custom of the country, crying aloud with great grief and many signs of feeling, as if they were escorting to the grave some distinguished defunct. From afar Aurangzeb saw this multitude and heard their great weeping and lamentation, and, wondering, sent to know the cause of so much sorrow. The musicians redoubled their outcry and their tears,

fancying the king would take compassion on them. Lamenting, they replied with sobs that the king's orders had killed Music; therefore they were bearing her to the grave. Report was made to the king, who quite calmly remarked that they should pray for the soul of Music, and see that she was thoroughly well buried.[61] The Emperor's reply displays a certain grim humour; but his orthodoxy would not allow of any variation of his original order. Notwithstanding the ban which he placed upon music, however, Aurangzeb, according to Manucci's testimony, continued to entertain dancing and singing-girls in the palace, for the diversion of his ladies, and so far unbent as to confer special names on their female superintendents. Bakhtawar Khan states that the Emperor understood music thoroughly and made no attempt to interfere with the art during the first few years of his reign. His subsequent objection to music was based on the teaching of the great Muhammadan Imam, Shafi; and in pursuance of his policy he was prepared even to grant cash allowances or land to musicians who declared themselves to be ashamed of their calling and desirous of relinquishing it.[62]

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CONCLUSION

The proposed thesis seeks to present a different picture regarding the identity of Mughal rule (1526-1707) in India. The period under review cannot be called a dark age full of atrocities, oppression, exploitation, socio-religious intolerance, injustice and irregularities as has been painted by many historians who happened to write with preconceived notion and therefore distorted evidence and twisted facts. In fact when Muslims came to India they found the land an abode of great civilization with huge national resources and rich cultural heritage. Political transition of authority was easily achieved by Muslims and they in no time adopted India as mother country and gave up practically all connections with the land they came from. By the time the Mughal period approached the Hindus and Muslims for living together for long as neighbours, despite of minor misunderstanding and diversities, came nearer to each other and became co-inhabitation. Both in urban areas and in country side. The co-existence for long thus resulted in cultural give and take. Dara Shikoh rightly saw within Hindu-Muslim co-existence, the meeting of two ocean (Hindu-Muslim) and cultural synthesis despite of diversities to local threats and misgivings continued to grow.

During the Sultanate as well as the Mughal period, the religion was more or less a matter of personal faith and not a source of strife in the society. Mutual aspirations, adjustments, admiration and understanding existed. The liberal religious movements in the form of *Sufi, Bhakti* and the numerous religious syncretistic cults, worked in a big way in creating and promoting harmonious co-existence of all Faiths. The teachings of the *Saints*, which were the combination of Vedanta and Islam, succeeded in convincing the masses that

of God is One. The Saint's conviction that the way to reach Him was not through reading and reciting the Scriptures or renouncing the world but by true devotion and service of the needy made them popular and revered figures. Their followers both Hindus and Muslims flocked to their place for guidance, blessings and sometime for assistance during hard times. Gradually, exclusiveness or belief in superiority of one's own religion disappeared and respect for all religions became the norm of the day. Besides, the liberal religious movements had social significance too. The Saints opposed the orthodoxy, rigidity and divisions of every kind. They emphasized the principles of equality, freedom and fraternity. The common kitchens and common set of rules and regulations promoted brotherly feelings and broke all barriers among their followers. They came to regard themselves as members of one large family and in such cordial atmosphere feelings of hatred, distrust and disharmony had no place. The *Sufis*, the *Bhagats* and the heads of various Orders were thus great integrators.

The teachings and the rapidly increasing influence of the saints irked the orthodox. sections of both the communities. But they could not restrain the new wave of religious liberalism, which swept over the entire country, despite hard efforts.

However, the saints could not have succeeded had the rulers then been tyrant or bigot. The rulers because of their political compulsion or liberal outlook allowed religious freedom to their subjects. Not only Hinduism and Islam had evolved a healthy pattern of synthesis. The Sikh religion and the numerous cults founded by Hindus and Muslims, emerged and flourished during their reign. The rulers not only respected and revered the saints but

many of them even became their followers. They visited their places for blessings, built tombs in their memory, wrote books, and composed verses in their honour.

Liberalism and not orthodoxy governed the public or private life of the rulers whether Hindu or Muslim. The Muslim rulers gave lands, *jagirs* and endowments for the construction and maintenance of temples and the Hindu and Sikh Rajas built mosques and tombs. The Muslim rulers even built small temples within the palaces and forts for their non-Muslim wives and officials. *Quran* and *Puranas* were placed together and were read with reference alike. They respected religious feelings of their subjects and were impartial in religious matters.

The Muslim rulers were not *Jehadis*. They did not impose their creed upon their subjects. Barring a few instances, conversions took place out of free will. Rulers like emperor Akbar and Sultan Zain-ulAbidin, provided freedom to their non-Muslim subjects to renounce the religion, if it had been forced upon them. and to rejoin the one of their ancestors. Often conversions were the concomitants of war but as features of normal policy they were rare. Had it been the policy of the rulers, the Muslim's would have out numbered the non-Muslims. Even in Agra and Delhi, the centres of the Muslim power, the Muslims did not form even one-fourth of the total population. Even during the reign of Aurangzeb forcible conversion did not takes place. He did not convert Shahu. the grandson of Shivaji, who along with his family remained, in his custody for many years. Aurangzeb even arranged his marriage with Hindu girls and with Hindu religious ceremonies. Under the prevalent religious freedom, one could choose the religion and join or formulate the cult of his

choice. If Hindus joined Islam then a good number of Muslims became Sikhs and Vaishnavas.

The state was not theocratic and the *Ulema* were not allowed to interfere in the state matters. Even an orthodox king like Aurargzeb did not pay any heed to the *Ulema* if it did not suit his designs. Temples or mosques were destroyed out of momentary fury during war. Aurangzeb is not' the solitary example, Maharaja Ajit Singh and Banda too destroyed the mosques. However, in peacetime, the rulers not only visited the sacred places to pay their respect but also gave liberal grants and sought counsels and directions from the religious saints.

In the liberal religious regime, the Muslims kings and commoners alike- celebrated festivals like Diwali, Dussehra, Holi Shivratri, and Basant Panchami with as much enthusiasm as they celebrated Eid, Bakrid or Shab-e-barat. These festivals were the national festivals and the state used to provide finances and made arrangements for the ceremonial pomp and show. Except Aurangzeb, all other Mughal emperors, the royal families and the nobles till the end of the empire, used to participate in the festivity with devotion.

Literature is the mirror of the age in which it flourishes. From this point of view the medieval period was the age of enlightenment of which any Indian can be proud of. The harmonious literature produced in this period is unprecedented. The liberal religious atmosphere devoid of fear, discrimination or prosecution ensured the freedom of expression. Saint Tulsi wrote Ram Charit Manas, Surdas composed Sursagar, Guru Arjun compiled Guru Granth Sahib and Mira's immortal songs in devotion of Lord Krishna aroused the religious fervour all over the country. Had the rulers been fanatic, such great

works could not have been written. Hindu writers wrote literature and composed poems on Prophet Mohammad, the Muslim writers wrote in praise of Rama Krishna and Sarswati and enriched the Vaishnav literature. Abdur Rahim. Jaisi Raskhan, who wrote with great devotion for Hindu gods were patronised by the Muslim rulers

It were the Muslim kings who made the Hindus to know their religion by getting the Hindu religious scriptures translated into local languages. Earlier only the Brahmins had the privilege of the knowledge of the *Shashtras* as all of them were written in *Devbhasha*, i.e., Sanskrit. Under the supervision and patronage of the Muslim rulers all the Hindu religious and non-religious works were translated not only in local languages but also in Persian thus enabling the foreigners to easily acquire the knowledge of Hinduism. The works were hugely decorated and preserved in the royal Libraries.

The rulers considered deliverance of justice to all without any bias as their religious duty. Even a commoner could drag a king or a noble to the court without any fear. None was deprived of justice as it was completely free or charge There was no animosity of any kind between *Pandit* and *Qazi*. Both used to sit together and decided cases of their respective community members if they desired so. The Muslim rulers had established a rule of law, which was in many ways more humane than that administered in the contemporary Europe. The death sentence, which was inflicted for theft in England, was reserved for serious offences under the Muslim administration in India.

Many of the Sultans and Emperors had Hindu wives who exercised influence even in state matters. And who can say that the Rajput *rajas* and

other Hindus who co-operated with the Muslim rulers and consented inter-religious marriages were not actuated by broader secular and patriotic outlook, rather than by a mere sense of their individual interest. Many Sultans and Emperors were born of Hindu mothers and were put on the throne, even by passing the claims of those born of Muslim mothers. How could such rulers hate or prosecute their Hindu relatives and their religion.

The Muslim rulers ruled as national kings. They identified with all the sections of the Indian society and not with any particular section. They never attempted to impose the civil law of Islam on non-Muslims. They took care of the religious sentiments of their subject. Cow slaughter was banned and separate arrangements of cooks, *Qazis* and *Pandits* were made even in the sarais built on the roadside for the travellers. Their outlook was progressive and their rule was not oppressive. Merit was the criterion for every job. Whosoever possessed the talent was richly rewarded and was provided with all state assistance in further development of the talent. Attempts were made to rescue the people from evil practices prevalent in the society. It were the Muslim rulers who banned the Sati practice though we give credit to British only. The Hindus were treated at par with the Muslims and were not discriminated on any ground. The Muslims rulers and the involves not only recruited Hindus in the state services but also fully trusted them. So much so that the Hindus were entrusted to guard the state treasury and in the absence of the king even the fort and the palace, in fact they enjoyed hegemony in the financial field. Not only the Muslim nobles but the kings as well used to borrow money from the wealthy Hindus. Had they been hostile to Hindus, they would not have allowed the Hindus to grow economically. The Hindus managed the finances of the

state and they also acted as the confidential advisor to the Muslim rulers. It was thus impossible for a Muslim king to rule over his non-Muslim subjects who formed the majority and to manage the economy of the state, in an autocratic manner.

Though that was not the age of democracy yet the government was of the people and for the people. The desire to make a place for themselves in the history of the country and the memory of the people, made the rulers work for the welfare of the people and the development of the country. They built strong forts, colleges, libraries, students hostels, hospitals, rest houses for the travellers, excavated tanks, laid down roads and gardens all over the country. The encouragement and patronage provided liberally by the state made Indian artisan manufacture goods of amazing beauty and quality. Artisans created wonders in every art. Taj Mahal was the crowning glory. To see this land of splendour and majestic magnificence, the merchants from far off countries, endangering their lives in crossing many unknown seas, came to this land to acquire Indian goods. The head of their respective Governments, including the British Queen wrote letters requesting the Muslim emperor to grant permission to the merchants for trade. India was the largest producer of the industrial goods in the entire world. Almost every nation was indebted to India for their supply in exchange for gold and silver The country was economically not only self sufficient but was exporting its products in large quantity to other counties and was getting gold in return. All parts of the country were flourishing in manufacture, agriculture and commerce. European travellers had testified that under the Mughals India was rich beyond compare.

The rulers were able to layout vast sums of money for palaces, temples, mausoleums. gardens. canals, tanks and irrigation reservoirs. Even military disturbances and dynastic wars were absorbed without much difficulty in to the general prosperity. The prosperity of the country could not have ushered in had there been no peace, amity and good will.

There was unity in diversity. The diverse religions, cultures and languages did not cause divisions but strengthened the harmonious co-existence and enriched the country in every field. People lived happily, as their kings were generous. just and benevolent. They stood on his side and fought for him even with their co-religionists. The Muslims professed a common faith yet they had no common centre of religious authority in India or outside India, like the Roman Catholic Church or later the national Churches of Europe which gave the feeling of belonging together. They were Indian Muslims and their loyalties were towards this land. So much so that Tumur regarded most of the Indian Muslims no better than heathens. During Akbar's rule even Afghanistan was captured and was made a part of India. They regarded their country as sacred. The last wish of dyeing wife of Dara was that she should be buried in her homeland Hindostan. Emperor Bahadur Shah cried and lamented in agony for being away in Rangoon and longed to see and got buried in the lap of his motherland.

All the rulers whether Muslims or Hindus, committed inhuman crimes for the sake of power. Aurangzeb was not the exception. In the words of Sir Jadunath Sarkar. "There was no crime which a Rajput would not commit for the sake of land. Father killed the son and the son murdered father. Women of

the noblest rank gave poison to their trusting kinsmen. Kings took the lives of loyal ministers. None, not even the highest born descendant of the God Rama, shrank from buying the aid of an alien plunderer to decide his domestic contest".

Though there were wars between Muslims and Hindus yet they were just as frequent or infrequent as those between Muslims and Muslims or Hindus and Hindus. Besides no war was ever fought on religious or communal issue. The rulers whether Muslims or Hindus fought with one another for their imperial designs but if the warring rulers belonged to two different religions, it was given a religious colour by the biased historians and sometimes by the rulers themselves. Akbar had no religious animosity with Pratap so was Shivaji with Aurangzeb but unfortunately their wars are characterized as religious wars fought for the defence of Dharma.

Conflicts and confrontation here and there but generally the Mughal India (1526-1707) was an age of enlightenment, elevation, eloquence, peace, progress and prosperity which made this land a paradise on earth, a golden sparrow and the Jewel of the East.

GLOSSARY

ahadi	soldier, immediately subordinate to the ruler, usually not part of the normal military hierarchy; specialist. Many craftsmen and artists were *ahadi*.
akhbarat-i-darbar-i-mualla	court bulletin
altamgha	'red stamp', royal seal; grant of land under royal seal in perpetuity.
alam	standard (for amirs) of upwards of 1000 *zat*
alif	first letter of the alphabet; cipher for Allah; sign standing for slimness
amir, umara	designation of an official above 500-*zat*
ashraf	Muslim immigrants in India from Arabia, Iran and Central Asia claiming noble descent.
asp	horse; *du aspa* soldier with responsibility for two horses; *nim aspa* soldier or *ahadi*, who has to share a horse with another; *sih aspa* soldier with responsibility for three horses.
bakhshi	paymaster; also inspector or secretary
baramasah	love poetry which expresses the feelings of a woman throughout the twelve months of the year
basmala	the saying, 'In the name of God', with which every activity has to commence; *basmala ka dulha* 'bridegroom of the *basmala*', a body who is introduced to the Qur'an for the first time at the age of four months and four days.

bhakti	Hindu devotion; *bhakta* devotee or adherent of Hindu mysticism or folk religion.
Bhajan	a kind of Bhakti song
bigha	a measure of a third of an acre.
bihari	style of Arabic calligraphy somewhat square and often coloured; popular in India for copying Qur'ans, especially during the 14th and 15th centuries.
burqa	women's clothing which covers the entire body, including the head, with a grille covering the eyes.
chandal mandal	a board-game invented by Akbar.
chapatti	flat unleavened bread prepared on a griddle and a staple even today in the subcontinent.
charas	intoxicant prepared from the flowers and dew of the hemp plant.
charbagh	('four gardens') garden divided into four sections by watercourses, with raised footpaths to permit a view over the flower beds, often with a pavilion in the centre.
chaupar	ancient board-game for four players using pawns and cowrie shells.
chaupasi	game of dice.
Chauth	¼ of the tax within Maratha territories
chuna	shiny polished mortar.
dahsala	tax on agricultural produce calculated decennially according to the average yield.

dal	split pulses, an important staple food.
dam	copper coin, 1/40th of a rupee during Akbar's reign.
burbar	imperial audience, state reception.
darshan	('vision') a view of the ruler; some one 'had *darshan*' means 'he was blessed by a view of …'
dhikr	'recollection' especially repetition of the names of God and religious formulae.
Dhimmis	non-Muslims deemed as 'people of the Book' (Christians, Jews, Zoroastrians, Sabeans, and in India, Hindus) who were exempted from military duties because of payment of the *jizya*; the *dhimmi* administered their own affairs under their own religious leader.
dhoti	loincloth wear by Hindus
dhrupad	oldest surviving genre of north Indian classical vocal music.
din-i-ilahi	the syncretic movement founded by Akbar from elements of various traditions; however, it was really intended to be a private matter rather than an alternative to the major prevailing religions.
diwali	'Row of Lamps', Hindu New Year and the most significant celebration in India.
dupyaza	rich meat stew with double the quantity of onions added to spices and yoghurt

farr-i-izadi	'divine glory' (Avestan *khwarena*), divinely bestowed fortune or splendour that accompanies the ruler.
fatawa-i- 'alamgiri	treatise of legal judgements compiled under Aurangzeb.
fatwa	legal judgement; strictly speaking a *responsum* *fil* elephant; in chess, bishop.
ghazal	'lyric', love poem in mono-rhyme usually not longer than 14 verses.
ghazi	Muslim frontier fighter; honorific bestowed on ruler for achieving victory in a battle against infidels.
gurmukhi	script uttered by the Guru, developed by Sikhs for their scriptures and later standardized as the script of modern Punjabi in India.
hammam	Muslim bath house.
holi	Hindu spring festival during which people spray coloured water and powder on each other.
huqqa	water-pipe.
idgah	place of assembly, where prayers are held during the two great festivals – id ul fitr and id uz zuha.
'id ul fitr	feast marking the end of Ramadan, *'id ul-adha* fest on the day of sacrifice during the month of pilgrimage
imambara	building in which Shia's store their paraphernalia for the Muharram festival.

ishaqbazi	'love game', Akbar's term for the antics of fantail pigeons.
jagat guru	'teacher of the world'.
jagir	rent-free grant; *jagirdar* one who possesses a gir.
jama	overgarment; long gown tied double-breasted and folded into plaits.
jharoka	the window through which the masses could get a glimpse of the ruler.
jizya	poll tax paid by *dhimmis* or non-Muslims.
jauhar	self-immolation by Rajput women, after the conquest of the kingdom in order to escape capture.
Kal yogie	evil time.
khan	chief, lord, leader; honorific for nobles and warriors, especially of Afghan or Turkish lineage.
khatt-i baburi	a style of writing invented by Babur.
khichri	dish of rice, spices and split lentils.
koka	foster brother; *koki* foster sister.
kos	measurement of length, equivalent to approximately 2 miles.
kuh-i nur	Kohinoor 'Mountain of Light'; a famous diamond.
kurnish	salutation performed to the sovereign in an audience.

la'l	a precious stone called ruby; termed accurately 'spinel'.
madad-i ma'ash	'income support', pension or revenue allocated for the upkeep of charitable institutions or pious scholars.
mahzar	decree, especially Akbar's decree of 1579.
ma'jun	paste, electuary; usually mixed with opium.
malfuzat	treatises of sayings, reports or apothegmata about Sufi preceptors.
mansabdar	an official rank.
ma'rifat	'gnosis'; mystical knowledge marking the transition from 'station' to 'state'.
marthiyya	dirges commemorating the martyrdom of Husayn ibn 'Ali in Kerbela.
maryam makani	'in the place of Mary';
mathnawi	'double one', a long narrative poem in rhyming couplets with a common metre.
maulud	poem celebrating the Prophet's birthday.
mirza	title of the timurid princes; later also 'noble man'; originally 'son of a great lord'.
mlecha	barbarian, unclean (as Hindus regarded non-Hindus or foreign invaders).
muhr	standard gold coin in almost 100% purity weighing 169 grains.
mufti	one empowered to promulgate fatwas.
muhtasib	market overseer; censor.

mujaddid	'renewer (of the religion)', supposed to appear at the beginning of every Islamic century.
muta	temporary marriage, which according to Shi'a law can be contracted for a matter of hours or even longer; frowned upon by sunnis
naskh	cursive handwriting
nasta'liq	'hanging' form of writing evolved in Persia which spread to Turkey and India; slanting, with differentiated ground and hair strokes.
nauruz	'new day', the beginning of the Iranian year at the spring (vernal) equinox.
nishan	'sign'; seal, stamp, decree; standard, banner.
pan	betel leaf; *pandan* elegantly made metallic boxes for storing the ingredients for preparing *pan*: betel leaves, areca nuts, lime paste, etc.
qaba	long overgarment for men.
qamargah	hunting grounds: an encircling border about ten miles wide within which the game is driven together in the middle of the enclosure, where it can easily be shot.
qasida	long poem, normally an ode, with a monorhyme.
qita	fragment; bridging phrase in a *ghazal* lacking the first two rhyming hemistiches.
qurbat	'nearness'; for Sufis, ethical proximity to allah through gnosis, obedience, etc.
rai	lower honorary title for Hindus.

raihani	'basil-like'; fine form of *naskh*, often used for Qur'anic writing.
rakhi	thread or band tied around the wrist by sisters to their brothers (Hindu brother's day festival).
rana	honorary title for Hindu generals or chieftains.
rekhta	'mixed', early form of Delhi Hindi-Urdu; macaronic verse wherein Persian covables were added on a Hindi template or vice versa.
riqa	large form of Arabic writing often used for documents.
ruba'i	quatrain with the rhyming pattern *aaba*; also epigram.
sabad	'dragon', method of besieging in warfare.
sabk-i-hindi	the 'Indian style' of Persian poetry.
sadr as-sudur	chief judge who is an authority on religious law and responsible for meaning *waaqfs* (endowments).
safina	'boat', portable anthology of Persian verse bound on the short side and carried in one's turban's fold or sleeve.
sajda	prostration.
sanad	authority original or delegated to confer privilege, fief or charter.
sanyasi	Hindu ascetic.
saqi	'cupbearer'.
Sardeshmukhi	1/10th a kind of tax beyond Maratha territories.

sati (suttee)	self-immolation by Hindu widows.
suyurghal	favour, reward, grant of land, city or province to an *amir* who in lieu was obliged to provide a fixed number of troops on demand.
sayyid	lineal descendants of Muhammad through 'Ali and Fatima.
shab-i-barat	full moon night on the 14/15 Sha'ban, month preceding Ramadan, and celebrated with prayers and fireworks in the subcontinent; it is the night when the destinies of Muslims for the coming year are said to be determined and sins forgiven.
shikasehta	'broken'; derivative form of *nasta'liq* which while difficult to read became popular for daily and bureaucratic purposes.
shikoh	splendour.
shivratri	night of the new moon and Hindu festival in honour of Lord shiva.
sulh-i- kul	'peace with all', Akbar's religio-political ideal.
swetambara	'white robed' Jain monks.
tariqa	'path'; for Sufis the fraternity or order in the mystical way; second stage in the threehfold path.
tughra	imperial signature. an image of a royal title created from calligraphy; a closed shape or mirror image.
tuzuk	institution, document.

ummi	'illiterate', epithet of the Prophet, who was regarded to have been *ummi*, as the possession of intellectual knowledge would have meant that he was not a pure vessel to receive the final revelation.
urf	customary law.
urs	'wedding', death anniversary of a saint.
uzuk	the state seal.
vina	double-bodied string instrument.
waqi-a-nawis	court chronicler who records the entire proceedings during sittings.
yaqut	corundum.
zaminbus	kissing the ground during the *durbar*.
zanana	the women's quarters of the palace.
zat	personal numerical rank of an officer.

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